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The Editors
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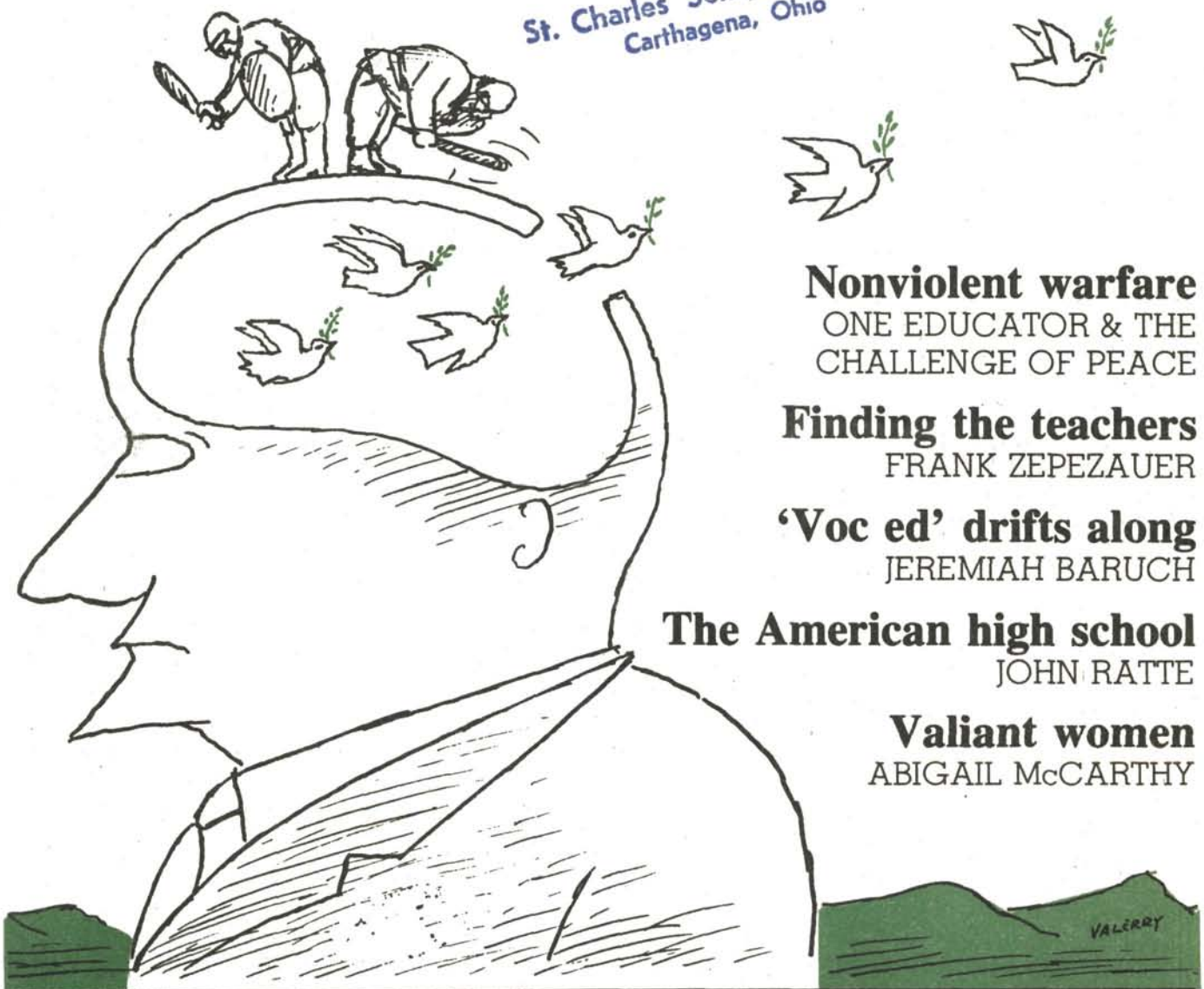

Nonviolent warfare
ONE EDUCATOR & THE CHALLENGE OF PEACE

Finding the teachers
FRANK ZEPEZAUER

'Voc ed' drifts along
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The American high school
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Valiant women
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DAVID TRACY ON KARL RAHNER • J. BRYAN HEHIR ON MEANS, MORALITY, & NUCLEAR WINTER • P. EVANS ON NAISON, PHEME PERKINS, O'BRIEN, MARK

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Correspondence

Mary Meehan replies

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: As a major architect of the Hatch amendment strategy, David O'Steen did the best he could to defend his position; but his comment was not persuasive ["Neither Incompetent Nor Indifferent," Mar. 23].

Nothing that O'Steen said dealt with the major practical defect of the Hatch amendment and its even weaker successor, the Eagleton amendment. Neither was ever close to having the two-thirds vote required for a constitutional amendment. Both Senate voting records and early comments from Senate offices made this very clear. The opponents of the Hatch amendment knew this; so did its supporters, if they could count at all.

Why did O'Steen and his allies in the Catholic bishops' committees push a constitutional amendment that had no chance of passage? And why did they do this when congressional leaders who have proved many times that they *can* count were calling for a statutory approach? What was the point of the long, painful, and expensive campaign for the Hatch amendment?

O'Steen was correct in saying that the president of the American Life Lobby (Judie Brown) opposed the Hatch amendment. After O'Steen and his allies had worked so hard to sidetrack or kill the human life bill, did he really expect that Brown and other supporters of the bill would say to him, "OK, fine; we'll help you with this constitutional amendment that has absolutely no chance to pass"? Did he think she had nothing better to do with her time?

Brown and many other movement leaders also felt that the Hatch amendment had serious philosophical flaws. There was much grass-roots opposition to it for the same reason. Yet the bishops pressed ahead with it long after its disastrous effects on the movement were clear for all to see.

O'Steen's kindly view of USCC/NCHLA lobbying is not shared by pro-life lobbyists who have seen some of their best efforts sabotaged, wittingly or unwittingly, by the bishops' men. The complaints go back to the mid-1970s, and they cut right across the political spectrum. They are made by conservatives and also by liberals like Thea Rossi Barron, who formerly lobbied for the National Right to Life Committee.

O'Steen said that I took out of context remarks by USCC lobbyist James Robinson. On the contrary, the words I quoted represented quite fairly the aloofness from the pro-life movement communicated by Robinson in his 1979 speech and subsequently. I interviewed Robinson at length in the fall of 1981, after the bishops' committee had already done much damage to the Helms-Hyde human life bill. One of my questions: Had he ever sat down with Helms or Hyde to talk about their bill? Without the slightest trace of embarrassment, Robinson replied, "I have not had, and nobody on my staff has had, any discussions with Helms or Hyde on their human life bill."

"Incompetent" is the *kindest* word I can think of to describe this kind of lobbying. But the Catholic bishops can turn the situation around in a day. If they want to.

MARY MEEHAN

No coherent mythos

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: I am writing in response to your editorial [Jan. 27], which focused on an article, "The Return of Enchantment," I had written for the *New York Times Magazine*.

First, you are incorrect in ascribing the caption of the article to me. The caption was, in fact, written without my knowledge and without consultation with my editor at the *Times*. I was deeply disturbed by it. While I did discuss certain social and political dangers growing out of the crisis in Western culture today, I would never have dismissed this state of affairs simply as "scary," nor would I have defined the trend itself only in terms of a "desire for fantasy and science fiction." The writer of the caption apparently felt that this was a way to attract readers to the piece.

Secondly, you refute the distinction I had drawn between myth and mysticism by referring to St. John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, Thomas Merton, and others, all of whom were, or are, firmly rooted within the Christian tradition and are not representative of the sort of unhinged mysticism that permeates much of the cultural trend today. The point I was making is that myth presents a sobering perspective of humanity's limits and inherent weaknesses. Mystical yearnings, like much of those today, that are not tied to a coherent mythos tend toward a grotesque inflation of the human ego and proffer belief in a limitless, grandiose self of the sort that psychologists associate with narcissism.

I certainly did not say that an appreciation of myth is evidence of moral weakness or a refusal to grow up, nor did I either write or in any way suggest that the choice is between a sterile, bureaucratic reason . . . and myth. I thoroughly agree that, as you state, "it is a choice of which goal-setting myths we choose to live by — since, whatever the case, live or perish by them we do." That was, precisely, the point of my article. In fact, since your editorial, by and large, consists of a rephrasing of the arguments I put forward in my article, I can hardly argue against them.

The point of my article was that the West has lost a coherent mythos or worldview and that what we are seeing in the culture are contrived and chaotic efforts to prop up a system of meaning to fill the void. I stated that the shaping of a

(Continued on page 253)

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THE FRITZ & GARY (& JESSE) SHOW

HIGH-MINDED JOURNALS like this one are never happy with presidential campaigns. Too much image, not enough issues, too many slogans, no great vision, unworthy smears, superficial beauty contests, appeals to baser instincts. Etc., etc. Well, we are not going to depart from form

The race for the Democratic nomination is terribly disappointing, and particularly so since Walter Mondale, Gary Hart, and Jesse Jackson are all political figures a good cut above the average. They are all capable of bringing to this contest sufficiently different perspectives on policy and styles of leadership to make of their competition a genuine exercise in democracy. Jackson has come closest to accomplishing what he set out to do — rallying black voters to a sense of their potential in American politics, reminding the people on the bottom and the margins that they can produce their own leadership. Along the way, he has also demonstrated such an abysmal insensitivity about anti-Semitic stereotyping that each apology and explanation seems to produce new wounds. He has equivocated about welcoming the support of a Black Muslim leader who first issued a vague threat against Jews and has now talked specifically about death for a black newsman. One can fathom the sense in the Jackson camp that they are not going to let their campaign of "outsiders" be dictated to by the established rules of the game. The particular rules at issue, however, are elementary ones of decency and democracy, and their casual treatment by Jackson has gravely marred his effort.

Of Mondale and Hart, it can be said that we are fast exhausting all possible ways of specifying the differences between them. Gary Hart is no longer a new idea, and Walter Mondale doesn't stir much special interest. Hart is said to have a manufactured personality and Mondale none at all. Hart is a problem-solver, Mondale a group broker. Hart could win but not govern; Mondale could govern but not win. Mondale is the creature of labor, Hart of Yuppies. The contest between the two candidates is a generational struggle, or a clash between industrial and post-industrial America, or a rerun of the 1960 primaries when an ambitious, image-conscious, skeptically liberal JFK ran against the hard-stumping, sentimental, visceral New Dealer Hubert Humphrey. All very interesting and plausible — and finally not very decisive in helping Democrats choose a candidate or shape a program.

The media and Democratic party orthodoxy conspire to prevent Mondale and Hart from saying anything at all. Hart accuses Mondale of wanting to link the removal of U.S. forces from Honduras to a deal with Nicaragua. Now that's actually an idea worth discussing — but Mondale quickly backs away. Mondale accuses Hart of voting against the Chrysler bailout, of opposing the windfall profits tax on oil, of previously conditioning the shift of America's embassy to Jerusalem on consultations with other nations, of treating the nuclear freeze as primarily symbolic. There

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is, in fact, something to be said for all those positions — if Hart would say it instead of engaging in evasive maneuvers. It seems that the campaign strategists have alloted each candidate one theme — "new ideas" for Hart, "experience" for Mondale. Anything which goes beyond sounding that single note is forbidden.

It is said that liberal Democrats would form a firing squad by standing in a circle and putting the victim in the middle. That is certainly the way they are conducting this campaign.

EASTER RITES

What time is it? Is that a simple question, a matter of consulting your calendar or quartz watch? No, it's not. This editorial space is often shot through with metaphors of time — time running out, time to act, time against us, for us, precise timing, inept timing, time spent, lost, or gained — and when you think of it, the issue is rarely, or only peripherally, one of uniform standard time, time determined by reference to the minor star in the galaxy we call the sun. The issue is the character, intensity, and, despite the cliché, the *quality* of time. Above all, we humans are concerned with critical moments, auspicious and inauspicious times, moments of opportunity when there's a chance the whole timbre of time can change, shift from cruel time to welcome time. When Martin Luther King proclaims a dream at the Lincoln Memorial, when Anwar Sadat shakes hands with Menachem Begin, when Argentina elects a humane, civilian president, we recognize "an event" in a sense that the daily horror show of the evening news is not. The normal news, when you reflect on it, is often no-news, a tale of collapse, collision, power-balance stalemate, wasted energy as in the physicist's entropy; it may be stimulating, fraudulently so, but in a qualitative sense, literally nothing is happening — except death in some form (and thus it's draining, nerve-racking). A real event, on the other hand, energizes the heart and will do so precisely because it represents qualitative movement, a change in tonal planes, a metamorphosis. Such happenings are as prized as they are rare.

We muse on time because, among the various time frames we dwell in, it's time for the annual Catholic Educational Association convention, a group dedicated to educing quality time for our children, and this year devoting its congress to the topic of peace. And, above all, because it's Easter time, a time that for all its coordination with seasonal greening time, has had much less success as a national folk festival than Christmas. No wonder. Unlike Christmas, Easter (and Pentecost) are adult feasts beyond the range of children. You may of course, even as a child, take delight in the colorful rituals of Passion Week and the Easter Vigil, but there's a sense of these great rememberings that no one can take in until the soul has been plowed open, not closed, by the nightmare of history. One must learn of death and return from the shadow of death, and to some degree take on the race's passion story and know, by "hints and guesses," that God has made it his own. All of which takes time, is time's main chance. Well, the point of lending an ear to the liturgical year in the midst of all that's fit and unfit to print or tape is just this: that it charges our often shallow calculus with times of intense movement — Sarah laughing; wily Jacob wrestling; a tongue-tied herdsman metamorphosed into a people's leader; kings dancing or caught in the act; an inconsolable Job, the reluctant Jonah, and fishermen, tax sharks, and prostitutes — at random — betrayed into being world-shakers. We stock our imaginations and nervous systems with this history, and thereby enter a movement of time that would turn our world inside out. "What the Bible gives us," writes Northrop Frye, "is not so much a cosmology as a vision of upward metamorphosis." To put on its figures ritually is like catching a fresh wind — or a breeze like a still, small voice.

Reflections like these lead us to the auspicious moment which many Catholics will witness this year, as they have for the past several, in the midst of their parish Easter Vigil service; namely, the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. That means the baptism of adult converts — and if we're not mistaken, there's a quiet educational and cultural revolution taking place here. The "instruction" of converts used to occur privately, by a priest, and normally in a rather bookish fashion; likewise the "profession of faith" took place in private. That practice tended to reinforce an individualistic and secretive form of piety. No longer; formal reception now occurs at the

SISTINE RESURRECTION

CHRIST IN A WHEELCHAIR

THE SISTINE CHAPEL ruins you for any other place in Rome. It will do so even more when the present work of restoration is completed and Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* returns to its original colors and grandeur.

Several months ago I stood one midday gazing up at the ceiling and what Michelangelo had made of the Old Testament stories. Adam looked astonishingly vital and powerful as he stretched out newly created through the touch of God's index finger. My eye ran along the vault to scan the other huge, muscular bodies — some of them extremely beautiful and all of them bursting with vivid life.

On the floor of the Sistine Chapel hundreds of tourists swirled around me. Many of them were students in loose sweaters and tight jeans. They were people on the move, drawn to Rome for a few days before they would shoulder their packs for another long train ride and a quick rush through some other immortal Italian city.

On the ceiling and down below everything was full of vitality and movement. Michelangelo's colossal nudes from the sixteenth century matched the living bodies of those vigorously young tourists.

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crowded Easter Vigil. And leading up to this event, the new programs of "initiation" are conspicuously communal, biblically oriented, and mystagogic. That is to say, these converts are being cultured in something very much like a Latin American "base community," their link to local concerns and to a world-wide, historical people with a determined collective mission to yeast a world. In a fundamentally prayerful context (can this kind of learning occur otherwise?), the convert is encouraged to explore a lifetime's spiritual journey, to discern the movement of the Spirit along irregular paths and chance encounters — and finally, to tell whether the poetic language of the Bible, its sprawling mix of story, proverbial wisdom, parable, prophetic iconoclasm and vision, fits a life, provides the images and the song the soul longs to utter. There is, of course, more. Suffice to say, however, that this new church practice may be bringing into our midst a new kind of Catholic — who, by another standard, may be the revival of a very old kind. One can also anticipate strains, expectations difficult to fulfill.

The clear gain, however, is the promise of the biblical orientation of these converts, although it may at first strike cradle Catholics as foreign — even Protestant! For many born-Catholics the Bible is peripheral to the liturgy and the Real Presence that is enacted psychodramatically, by putting-on Christ symbolically, swallowing the substance of the mystery disclosed in Him, through Him. Biblical study, familiarity with the actual historical and sociological settings of biblical figures, can help dispel the sentimentalism that often tends to enervate such ritual role-play. On the other hand, the centrality of ritual and ritual's capacity to transform the quality of time into a visionary medium is not the luxury item that either activists or academics tend to think it, much less the aesthete's device for appreciating the Bible as literature. On the contrary, ritual enactment offers a key to the high times the Bible testifies to, gives access to the same great current here and now, in our own time, place, and circumstance, that moved Moses, Isaiah, and Jesus.

Hence the dramaturgy of Christian ritual: it's the privileged way into the Jewish sense of history and its Christian coda. And as the theatrical analogy suggests, you can't come to either Bible or liturgy cold; prayer, spiritual discipline, are the necessary rehearsal and staging. But the analogy to theater also suggests something else: that the passive audience, the inert spectators, the "frozen people of God," who ordinarily still warm the bench at the Mass, won't do. There's a vast task here hardly begun in our time: to get the congregation into the action, to give them parts in the performance. To the extent our liturgy reinforces this spectator stance, it is unlikely that ritual will release the Pentecostal fire, that great subsurface historical movement, which we claim Jesus came to set free.

It all contrasted cruelly with the figure strapped into the wheelchair at my side. As a child Pino had been ravaged by polio. Now in his late twenties, he can really move only the muscles of one arm. He uses his left hand to paint landscapes and still lifes. He wanted to see Michelangelo's masterpieces in the hope of finding more inspiration and extending his artistic repertoire. A dear friend had driven him into Rome. We stood there flanking Pino's wheelchair in the middle of the Sistine Chapel. There was not another handicapped person within sight.

To make some sense of what I was experiencing I looked round that sea of Renaissance success for some representation of Good Friday. High up to the left angels are carrying to the judgment scene Christ's cross. But it is a bare cross; the body has gone. The thought struck me: "Christ's body is here beside me, tied helplessly to this wheelchair." I remembered Pascal's great dictum, "Jesus will be in agony till the end of the world. We must not sleep during that time."

Later I shared my experience with an old friend, a university chaplain visiting from England. "The handicapped must be there in the midst of life," he commented. "We need them even more than they need us. We are all handicapped in our different ways."

I threw in what I had learned from the first stage of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*. "Do you remember how prospective converts come to be signed with the cross on their forehead, ears, eyes, lips, breast, and shoulders? They bring to the church's representative their bodies and their sufferings. That ceremony expresses our most basic solidarity with Christ." My words ran on: "We may be young, middle-aged or old, male or female, black, white, brown, or yellow. But like Jesus we all have bodies and sufferings. To place them under the sign of the cross is our most fundamental way of saying, 'We want to share in the mystery of your bodily dying and rising.' "

As is the case with many other ill or handicapped people, Pino's body *is* his suffering. Yet that body is also a bright reminder of the resurrection. It is joy and life, not despair and death, which shine forth from his pale face and soft Italian eyes. That day, with his wasted and crippled body, Pino brought not only the crucifixion but also the resurrection into the Sistine Chapel. Some of those bejeaned tourists may have noticed his face as well as his body. If they did, they could have carried away from Rome something even better than the memory of some sixteenth-century masterpieces.

This helplessly handicapped young man makes explicit for anyone who cares to gaze at him the only hope finally worth having. One way or another we are all strapped to our wheelchairs. But the look on Pino's face proclaims that one day God will raise and transform our crippled lives and our crippled world.

GERALD O'COLLINS

(Gerald O'Collins, S.J., is professor of fundamental theology at the Gregorian University. His books include Foundations of Theology, What Are They Saying About The Resurrection?, *and* Fundamental Theology, *all published by Paulist Press.)*

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Karl Rahner, S.J.

'ALL IS GRACE'
A ROOTED RADICAL

SINCE Karl Rahner's death on March 30, many of us have been stunned by the recognition of how much we all owe him. Part of what stuns us is, of course, his extraordinary energy and output: over four thousand articles and books on every conceivable subject ranging from Chalcedon to the Beatles and to the grace of everyday life. Then there is his influence. There is probably no Catholic theologian writing today anywhere in the world who does not bear Rahner's imprint. More recently, there are many Protestant theologians who feel the same impact.

Yes, he was a major influence on Vatican II and on much of the best that has happened in the church since then. Indeed, Karl Rahner was the most influential Catholic thinker since Newman. Even those who could never quite follow the labyrinthine sentences and complex abstractions of his thought sensed that something important was at stake here, something worthwhile, something which would last.

He was, everyone says, a "theologian's theologian." And so he was. Yet Karl Rahner was something more. His prose, which many affected to find so tortuous, had a power and attraction peculiar to itself. There is a restless, even driven, quality to a Rahner essay which forces the reader to think. He always seemed to begin with a rhetoric reminiscent of Cicero: all the questions he would not ask, could not ask, had no time now to ask, hoped to know enough some day to be able to ask properly. So many unanswered, perhaps unanswerable, questions. Then, exit Cicero, and enter pure Rahner: the question he would ask.

That question inevitably turned out to be one of the central questions we wanted to ask all along: what can we know? what can we hope for? who are we? who is this Jesus Christ? what does it mean to speak the word mystery? what is grace? who is God? Through all these questions, the religious quest of Karl Rahner became imprinted on the Catholic landscape. And as the work progressed a curious sea change took place. The "later" Rahner insisted he knew less and less than he thought he knew at the beginning. God's reality became more incomprehensible the more comprehensible our best thoughts about God became. And we became more and more incomprehensible to ourselves the more we learned of ourselves. Our once-clear answers dissolved into unnerving questions. The questions multiplied and intensified to render theology a religious quest, worthy of a lifetime of effort.

In Karl Rahner, thinking became a religious experience. Through those questions and under the pressure of that quest, mysteries, problems, and doctrines yielded a suddenly felt sense of radical mystery: the mystery we are finally to ourselves, we are before one another, before history and cosmos, above all before God. In that context, Jesus Christ was the event of disclosure, the decisive manifestation of both God and ourselves. Yet reflection on the reality of Jesus Christ did not dissolve but intensified that sense of radical mystery. Before any too easy answer could emerge, the paradoxes, the aporias, and the questions returned; who, then, in the light of this radical mystery of Jesus Christ are we, who is God, what is real?

"All is grace," he insisted over and over again. In Rahner this unlikely response, this surprising faith became believable. For no serious reader could miss that here, for once, theology preached no cheap grace, no fatuous optimism. Optimism and pessimism, he knew, are natural vices; hope is a theological virtue. The brooding Rahnerian prose, that undertone, at once mystical and strangely ironic, even melancholic, the refusal of any easy comprehensibility, the surprising bluntness of his occasional concrete advice, the ability to face what we call reality and still be able to think, the willingness to pose a fundamental question rather than add yet another answer to the cluttered list — all these peculiarly Rahnerian motifs conspired to make a struggling reader willing to suspend the usual disbelief and find plausible the startling thought, "All is grace."

Rahner knew Thomas Aquinas as well as the Thomists did. He knew the old manuals so well that he exploded their once-overpowering influence forever. He knew and loved the classic doctrines of the tradition. But he also knew some other realities that most Catholic theologians of his youth had long since forgotten: Augustine, the mystics, the promise and threat of modernity, the difference between thinking and problem-solving, the power of theological questioning as an existential quest.

There are only four or five thinkers in the rich tradition of Catholic theology of whom it can be said: after that work, nothing can be the same again. Karl Rahner was one of those few. He knew that God is God and that we are not. And knowing this, he knew how little we know. He also knew how much we can understand if we would stop clinging to our pathetic certainties and our brittle answers. Then we might learn to think, to let go into radical mystery, to yield to what Rahner did not hesitate to name the radical skepticism of the Christian: the deepening knowledge that all is mystery, the unexpected trust that all is grace.

We were blessed to have him among us. Karl Rahner was rooted in the Catholic tradition in all its plurality and power. He was as restless as the rest of us in this incredible century. Yet somehow Rahner found a religious-theological way which was honest, courageous, and believable. May he rest in peace.

DAVID TRACY

(Father David Tracy, associate professor at the University of Chicago Divinity School, is the author of Blessed Rage for Order *and* The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism, *both published by Crossroad Books.)*

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Effects of nuclear war

THE BIG CHILL

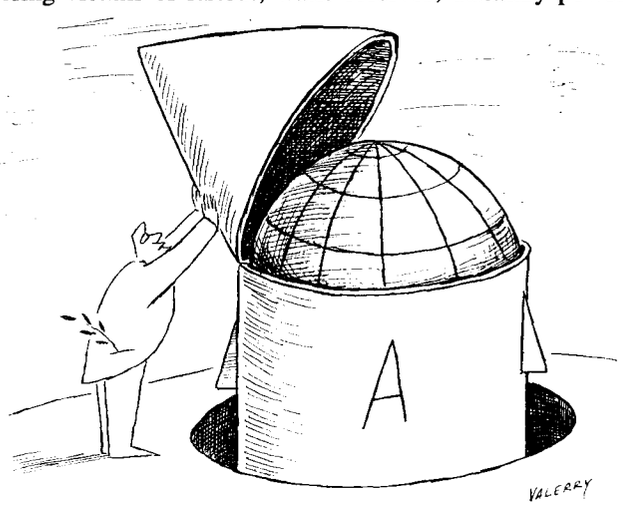
LEARNING ABOUT 'NUCLEAR WINTER'

LAST SUMMER I had the opportunity to visit fallout shelters in Switzerland. The first of these was in a newly built home for four occupants which, in common with all new Swiss construction, includes a basement fallout shelter: thick concrete walls and ceiling, a heavy window shutter of comparable thickness and an entry door of similar construction, both of which swing on heavy iron hinges. Its means of ventilation was a hand-driven pump provided with an air filter.

Another shelter, with bunks in tiers, provided underground quarters for 110 emergency workers. There were kitchens, water reservoirs, reserve power facilities, and bathrooms. The garage space, which opened out on a flat area under the hill, was filled by small trailers loaded with fire-fighting and rescue equipment. Special clothing was available, as well as prepared stacks of rescue gear, ropes, hawsers, and such like. In a commodious staff room were rows of tables facing expansive wall maps showing, in numbered sectors, all the homes and buildings of the town. On the tables were loose-leaf notebooks. Each bore a sector number, and contained detailed plans of all recent construction and estimates of the numbers of individuals housed or working in the structures.

The 110 bunks would be occupied by trained individuals, many of them army reservists, with special skills and subject to call for service with the pioneer unit.

Even more impressive was the hospital I visited on the west side of Geneva: 250 beds, glass-enclosed, beautifully situated on the side of a hill. What was novel to me lay beneath the surface. Another 250 "beds" for casualties, two operating rooms, a large decontamination area into which vehicles could be driven and unloaded, showers and new clothes for the entering victims of fallout, water reserves, auxiliary power and heating equipment, large storerooms for surgical supplies and food, kitchens, bathrooms, and decontamination devices to purify the air. Plans called for the evacuation from the above-ground portion of the hospital of all reasonably transportable patients who presumably would be transferred to their local shelters. Staff activities would then be shifted to the underground hospital. Supplies were calculated to last for two weeks.



For some five-hundred years the Swiss have avoided significant bloodshed by intrusion from without. Furthermore they have a citizen army of 650,000 men that can be mobilized in forty-eight hours or less, each soldier having in his home a gun and cartridges, in a sealed container. Inducted into the army at age twenty for eight months of basic training, virtually every male Swiss citizen serves in the reserves until the age of fifty. Their civil defense measures are equally developed. The country is small, well disciplined, and avoids argument with potential adversaries.

Like many Americans, who are finally overcoming their understandable psychological resistance and recognizing the awful power of nuclear weaponry, I was aware of the millions of deaths that would follow from even a so-called "limited" nuclear war and of the claims of civil defense advocates that a good portion of these millions might be saved by adequate preparation. In fact, I left Switzerland with the belief that with sufficient advance warning of attack, significant numbers of Swiss might be spared immediate destruction but it was not clear what their ultimate fate might be when supplies run out and they find their neighbors in other countries similarly distressed.

On my return home I discovered new evidence postulating the long-term effects, physical and biological, of multiple nuclear explosions. Carl Sagan was stimulated by his earlier work on the chilling temperature effects of dust storms on Mars, observed by Mariner IX's recording apparatus, to draw analogies. Computer analyses were made of the probable effects of various paradigms of nuclear explosions in varying sizes, some bursts at ground level, others at selected altitudes above ground. A year ago the studies were critically reviewed at a meeting in Cambridge with more than forty physical scientists. Their conclusions were then interpreted, in terms of possible biological effects, by a second team headed by Paul Ehrlich who considered the biological implications, particularly from the standpoint of pastoral ecology. The TTAPS projections of the physical effects (named TTAPS for the initials of the participants: T.P. Turco, O.B. Toon, T.P. Ackerman, J.P. Pollock, and Sagan) and the ecological implications for animal, plant, and aquatic life were presented by Erhlich in the fall of 1983 in a two-day open conference, "The World After Nuclear War." The meeting culminated in an exchange by satellite between the American principals and a group of Moscow scientists who have been engaged in similar studies. Subsequently Senators Kennedy and Hatfield organized a morning symposium in the Senate caucus room in which the issues were discussed by a panel of four Soviet scientists and four U.S. representatives. The Soviet delegation consisted of:

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Yevgeniy P. Velikhov, vice president of the Soviet Academy of Sciences; Alexander S. Pavlov, academician and director of the Moscow Scientific Institute on Roentgenology and Radiology; Vladimir V. Aleksandrov, head of the Laboratory of Climate Modeling at the Computer Center of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, and Serguei Kapitza, professor of physics at the Moscow Physico-Technical Institute and senior research fellow at the Institute for Physical Problems, Soviet Academy of Sciences. The American representatives were Sagan, Ehrlich, Lewis Thomas, and Jack Geiger. There was agreement among all the panelists that the conference's conclusions were sound.

The base study was that of a scenario in which a 5,000-megaton all-out nuclear attack on the United States would, through a combination of ground and air bursts, produce so much air-borne dirt from ground bursts and soot from fires, rural and especially urban, as to cause after a period of a couple of weeks, a reduction of ninety-five percent of sunlight throughout the Northern hemisphere. The obstruction of sunlight would result in a drop in surface temperatures to -30°C. Wind currents aloft would extend the pall over the entire northern half of the globe and eventually, to a lesser degree, over the Southern Hemisphere.

The biological effects would be devastating, as set out by Ehrlich. The subzero temperature would freeze surface waters and sewage systems over wide areas. Photosynthesis would be slowed and marine ecosystems would suffer seriously. The pall, it is anticipated, would prevail for six months or longer; and as clearing occurred, the earth would be subjected to excess amounts of ultra-violet light. The complications of such an event for food supply locally and also for countries other than the superpowers would be profound, for many of them are dependent for many of their staples on U.S. and Canadian production.

Although the TTAPS projections, under the expressive label "nuclear winter," have gained a good amount of publicity, it is hard to know whether the public (or political leaders, for that matter) will recognize the scientific basis of these calculations — or whether "nuclear winter" will be lumped with a long line of end-of-the-world predictions and elicit little more than a helpless shrug. Victor Weisskopf, a physicist who was involved in the development of the atomic bomb and who is now a member of the Papal Academy of Sciences, has commented on how difficult it has been for physicists to make the destructive power of the atom generally understood and has expressed appreciation of the effective role of physicians in publicizing the facts. The impact of Physicians for Social Responsibility who stand for a weapons freeze and bilateral nuclear disarmament, carefully monitored, has been impressive. Now numbering more than twenty thousand members in the United States, it has become a crucial unit in an umbrella group, the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War which includes PSR and PSR-like groups throughout the world, East and West. The thirty-seven affiliated groups include over seventy-five thousand individuals.

These groups believe that nuclear weaponry contains seeds of destruction out of all proportion to the classical notion of the purposes of warfare and do not share the conviction of the military planners who, paradoxically, see prevention as an exercise in strength which must be continually buttressed by additional arms and by improved military skills and technology extended to their ultimate limits.

If the "nuclear winter" scenario is as likely as the current scientific discussion suggests, then much of what these planners support is in fact a suicide machine that, if used, would rebound on us — and the rest of the world — quite regardless of what our adversaries did. Nothing could be better proof of what President Eisenhower, a man not unfamiliar with the art of warfare, wrote in 1956 to a friend, that one day both sides would have to "meet at the conference table with the understanding that the era of armaments has ended, and the human race must conform its actions to this truth or die."

JOSEPH P. EVANS

(Joseph P. Evans, M.D., a widely honored neurological surgeon, is Washington, D.C., area representative for International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.)

Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

VALIANT WOMEN

WHAT ONE COLLEGE VALUED

ALL THROUGH last summer and into the fall the mail brought reactions to my June column. That column (June 17, 1983) dealt with the surprising number of women in public service who were graduates of Catholic women's colleges. (I noted that research indicates that the highest number of women achievers seem to come from the women's colleges and that an unusual number of those elected to high office seemed to come from the *Catholic* women's colleges.) Most of the letters expressed approval or amazement — many asked for permission to reproduce the column — but a few were disturbing.

Perhaps the one which disturbed me most was a two-line communication from an alumna of my own college. "You begged the question in your column — who are these women achievers from St. Catherine's?" Did she really want to know, I wondered. Or did I detect a sour note in that brief letter. Perhaps she thought I had been unduly modest about our college? But although I am inordinately proud of my alma mater — one of the largest women's colleges in the country and the first Catholic institution of any kind to be awarded a Phi Beta Kappa chapter — we do not yet have a

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member of the House of Representatives among our alumnae. Or a big city mayor.

No, I concluded sadly, it was not pride in our achievers which had motivated that now-distant letter but, I felt, something else — a critical assumption that ours and other Catholic women's colleges value the wrong kind of achievement. Is that true? The best answer, I decided, lay in the criteria established by the alumnae themselves for the awarding of alumnae honors.

St. Catherine's, like other women's colleges, numbers among its graduates many who are successful in ordinary terms. There are doctors, lawyers, artists, and teachers among them, executive directors of organizations, women who have reached the vice-presidential and board level of large corporations, and women who head and own smaller ones. But such achievement alone, so held the alumnae board, was not the full measure of success. They wanted to name women who represented the qualities St. Catherine's "tries to foster" in the women it educates — a commitment to moral and spiritual growth and the desire to extend the whole person in service to others. A bit fulsome? Perhaps. Yet they seemed to have little trouble in finding women who embodied these ideals and who represented hundreds of others.

At first glance over the awards of recent years, the first two honorees I lit upon seemed pat and predictable — that classic Catholic dyad — the career woman on the one hand, the mother of a large family and homemaker on the other. But the mother of eleven in the tiny North Dakota town is commended for the way in which her home was "a magnet for all those who needed help, comfort, food, and security" and for accepting positions of influence in the community. Nor did the career woman, a professor at the university, rest on her professional laurels. "Kate has gone as far as anyone I know in realizing Cardinal Newman's ideal of an intelligent Catholic lay person actively involved in the life and work of the university," wrote the director of the Newman Center.

The common thread running through the lives of the honorees is that they were prepared to do, and did whatever they

did, well, and that they had a strong sense of social responsibility. They have included a doctor who has devoted her life to the poor in Selma, Alabama; a Sister of St. Joseph who helped found a refuge for homeless women and children; and a single woman, twenty-five years a librarian in a boys' school — a feminist and a peace activist — who has "touched the lives of thousands of young people" and affected them with her "quiet and gentle guidance." They have also included wives and mothers of extraordinary achievement — a polio-stricken woman faced with a life of leg braces and crutches who nevertheless mothered two children and managed a career of forty-years' duration while serving with her husband in various community organizations; and a mother of three whose constructive work in government-related positions was recognized by her appointment as advisor to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission and her election to chair the Council on Human Relations.

I cannot mention them all, and listing their accomplishments does not begin to hint of the savor with which they salted their worlds. They were, and are, women who *matter* to others.

I think of the two from my own college generation. As students they were generously made and beautiful in the way Mid-western girls often are. (We in college called each other "girls" then!) Each welcomed others into a circle of warmth, laughter, and friendliness which seemed to exist because she was there. Each was a superior student; each was talented. Alice Shea, quiet and droll, wrote witty sketches and essays. Betty Hodgins, exuberant and perceptive, wrote elegant sonnets. Each was to use her talent for communication in unforeseen ways.

Alice went to teach in a small town, as so many of us did, and met and married her husband there. Betty stayed in her native city and married there. In the words of her citation Alice represents the many alumnae who have influenced small communities. She was a volunteer teacher of English in the parochial school, a parish worker in liturgy and ecumenism among other things. She led others as president of university women, diocesan officer, and head of the American Field Service program. She enriched the community by founding a Great Books program, sparking a college night for prospective students, administering scholarships, planning a performing arts center and showing "a genius for friendship with the poor, the handicapped, the lonely, the foreigner, the elderly, and the uncertain young." Like so many wives she helped her husband build his business and, when he died, became chairman of its board.

Betty Hodgins's life has been, perhaps, more difficult and even more widely effective. When the second of her eight children was retarded by encephalitis, she became first a volunteer in the service of the mentally handicapped, then an organizer and lobbyist and finally professional director of the Association for Retarded Children. "Her work has reached the lives of thousands . . . she began when services were almost nonexistent" and did not stop until there were special education state laws. The enthusiasm of her student days became the fuel for the drive to fill a need. In addition, after her husband's death she carried both full responsibility for her family and a full-time job, and lost none of her zest for life and enjoyment.

These, unknown letter-writer, are the like of our achievers. And there are thousands like them from the Catholic colleges all over the country. Like the scriptural valiant women they laid their hands to strong things and we can call them blesséd. ABIGAIL McCARTHY

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Church/world watch

Morality & the question of means

J. Bryan Hehir

AMONG ELECTED officials, speaking well is a vocational imperative, writing well is a rare commodity. Our country has had a tradition of political leaders who were superb writers; very few are in evidence today. Senator Moynihan of New York is a welcome exception. He writes often and very well indeed. Given the range of topics which he addresses and his penchant for finding unexpected modes of analysis, it is almost impossible for a consistent reader to agree with him all the time, but equally impossible not to be engaged by him and to feel rewarded by the effort. His most recent product, a slim volume with the intriguing title *Loyalties*, is a fascinating contribution to a controverted theme in the U.S. foreign policy debate.

Moynihan's focus, as I read him, is on an *ethic of means* as a guide for foreign policy. The first essay in *Loyalties* is on the MX missile, the last one on international law. Both highlight the significance of the means used to project American policy in the world. Moynihan's concerns are with the wisdom of policy choices and the morality of political action. The means question is a way to test both morality and wisdom.

Moynihan's own general position in the foreign policy debate — he is often described as a Jacksonian Democrat — provides a strategic place from which to highlight the question of means. It is sometimes asserted — and more often simply assumed without assertion — that the nature of the U.S.-Soviet competition renders a concern for means a luxury — even a dangerous distraction — in the policy debate. One of Michael Novak's persistent criticisms of the U.S. bishops' recent pastoral letter has been that it focuses on the *means* of the superpower rivalry (nuclear weapons) and fails to address the *nature* of the two systems in conflict. Novak, the *Wall Street Journal*, and others have found the French bishops' statement more persuasive because of its stress on the threat from the East and its much briefer, almost cryptic examination of the means issue in nuclear policy. Senator Moynihan's credentials in criticism of the Soviet Union are impeccable and quite visibly displayed in *Loyalties*. But he argues persuasively (using the U.S. bishops' pastoral) that a failure to address the means question leads to bad policy — in both the normative and empirical sense of the phrase.

The essay on the MX deployment is particularly compelling. The Scowcroft Commission, which was instrumental in shaping the case for congressional approval of the MX program, argued in the end that the U.S. had to build the MX to demonstrate its political will to the Soviets. Moynihan, always alert to Soviet perceptions of the United States, contends that a fixation on standing strong (or tall) without consideration of *how* we plan to demonstrate our political will can lead to disaster. He describes the MX as "perhaps the most fatal mistake in our history." The reason is the impact of MX deployment on the larger dynamic of the strategic balance: "What we do know is that these missiles, the most powerful and accurate we had ever developed, would be deployed in a mode so vulnerable as practically to invite a preemptive Soviet strike."

This sentence needs to be unpacked. The MX invites attack precisely because it poses a threat (of "hard target kill") to major Soviet systems *and* because the MX is vulnerable to attack. The unique combination of power and vulnerability (a mirror image of Soviet SS-18s and 19s) produces in both superpowers exactly the wrong inclinations: moves toward a launch-on-warning strategy. In brief, the wrong means of defense produces a strategy that is indefensible strategically or morally. In Moynihan's words, "The vote to deploy the MX in a launch-on-warning mode indicated either an absence of principle or else its abandonment. There will be no return to principle unless we teach ourselves how to weigh the moral dimensions and dilemmas of the decisions we are required to make."

It is precisely this task, informing the strategic debate with a structure of principles, that the Pastoral Letter addressed. Moynihan has relied upon *The Challenge of Peace* in his effort to oppose MX deployment. Alongside the continuing discussion of how the pastoral is being used in the church, more attention should be given to how others are using it in the wider political and public debate. The MX debate is not over — deployment has been approved but has not occurred. The issue is one which turns on our ethic of means; the logic of the pastoral can provide support for those who sense the danger of this "fatal mistake."

What means we choose are the measure of policy in areas beyond the nuclear question. The burden of the final essay in *Loyalties* is the role of international law as a guide for policy choices. Moynihan's thesis, that an absence of concern for law cripples our choices and erodes our principles, is carefully argued. On the basis of the

(Continued on page 255)

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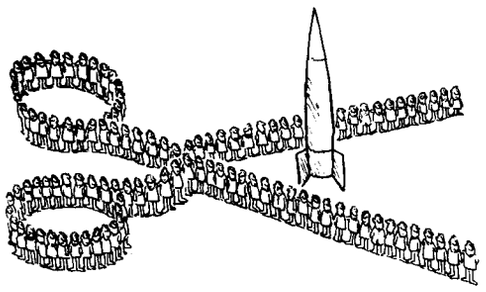

Alternative to Armageddon?

JAMES TINDALL

THE YEAR IS 2010. Russian tanks swarm into a small country in Western Europe, spearheading an invasion by Warsaw Pact troops. But this invasion is unusual because no shots are fired. Instead, the Communist soldiers are greeted by shuttered windows and deserted streets. The nation being overrun phased out its military years ago and now relies on a carefully planned program of civilian non-violent resistance to deter its enemies. Immediately, clandestine government radio stations broadcast a call for a general strike to oppose the invaders. Factories close down, key machine parts are "lost," industrial experts go into exile, and normal channels of communication and transportation within the country are disrupted.

In an effort to get the country moving again, the Soviets round up government officials and tell them to end the strike or face execution. The few leaders that collaborate are socially ostracized. Meanwhile, an underground leadership begins to function and the economic shutdown continues unabated. Frustrated, the Soviets blunder by ordering troops to shoot at nonviolent demonstrators. As a result, the troops become restless, morale problems develop, and desertions begin to occur. Finally, realizing that the costs of continued occupation outweigh any possible benefits, the Soviets withdraw.

Farfetched? Perhaps. But Gene Sharp has reason to believe we could see a scenario like this within twenty-five years. Sharp is a professor of sociology and political science at Southeastern Massachusetts University and an Associate of Harvard's Center for International Affairs. He is also the major U.S. proponent of civilian-based defense — a system of national defense that utilizes nonviolent resistance.

Sharp testified before the U.S. Catholic bishops for their pastoral letter on war and peace. That letter received a great deal of publicity because of its criticism of U.S. nuclear strategy. But the bishops also suggest ways in which Christians can help develop policies that lead away from nuclear confrontation. Writing about nonviolent national defense, the bishops state that "practical reason as well as spiritual faith demands that it be given serious consideration as an alternative course of action." And they declare that nonviolent principles "are thoroughly compatible with — and to some extent derived from — Christian teachings and must be part of any Christian theology of peace." Yet while both Sharp and the bishops advocate more study of nonmilitary defense, they appear to approach nonviolence from fundamentally different perspectives.

Sharp's ideas are most clearly developed in his three-volume monumental work *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, available from Porter Sargent Publishers.

Each volume explores a different aspect of nonviolent strategy. In part one, *Power and Struggle*, ($2.95, 144 pp.), Sharp cites numerous historical examples of attempts to use nonviolent sanctions. Often these struggles were undertaken without planning, preparation, or any real knowledge of the dynamics of nonviolent action. Usually nonviolence was used as a last resort, when all else had failed. Yet surprisingly, in many of the examples Sharp describes, the resisters were completely or partially successful.

Gandhi's campaign for Indian independence is the best known illustration of nonviolent struggle. But Sharp points out that nonviolent sanctions had been used extensively (although perhaps less skillfully) long before Gandhi. Major aspects of the Russian Revolutions in 1905 and 1917 involved nonviolent resistance, and the American colonists made effective use of economic boycotts, tax refusal, and political non-cooperation. More recent examples include U.S. civil-rights campaigns and Solidarity's struggle in Poland. I will recount two illustrations here: the defeat of a coup d'état in 1920 and an unsuccessful attempt at national defense in 1968. In both cases the resistance was completely spontaneous.

The coup occurred in Germany on March 12, 1920, when Wolfgang Kapp and his right-wing troops marched into Berlin to oust the struggling new government of the Weimar Repub-

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lic. President Ebert fled without a fight but proclaimed that he was still head of the legal government. Resistance to the Kappists took a number of forms. Thousands of workers in Berlin went on strike. Officers of the *Reichsbank* refused to disburse money to Kapp because he could not obtain an authorized signature. Kapp had trouble finding a typist — or a typewriter — to prepare his manifesto, and it was delivered too late for the Sunday papers. Many qualified government officials refused to participate in the new regime, forcing Kapp to appoint inexperienced men to his cabinet. Finally, responding to mounting resistance, Kapp resigned on March 17. His defeated troops marched out of Berlin the next day.

Sharp concedes that the coup was amateurish and poorly planned. And, as in most instances of spontaneous resistance, there was a certain amount of violence, especially in outlying towns. Yet Sharp maintains it was the widespread refusal of the bureaucracy and population to cooperate with his illegal government that ultimately crushed Kapp's *Putsch*.

Since most countries have militaries they feel compelled to use when invaded, it is perhaps not surprising that there are very few examples of nonviolent national defense. But when half a million Warsaw Pact troops stormed into Czechoslovakia in 1968 to replace the Dubcek regime with a puppet government, Czech officials ordered soldiers to remain in their barracks. Czech leaders who weren't kidnapped by the Soviets issued statements denying that the Warsaw troops had been invited in. A pirate radio network (which had been set up in case of a NATO invasion) coordinated the resistance by organizing a clandestine congress, calling for short general strikes and urging the people to remain nonviolent. Soviet troops found themselves clashing with unarmed civilians determined to defend their homeland. As a result, Sharp reports, troops had to be rotated out of Czechoslovakia in a few days because of morale problems. Adding to Soviet demoralization was the fact that very few Czech government leaders and police collaborated with the invaders.

Startled by this strange form of warfare, the Soviets agreed to a compromise that left the Dubcek regime in power. Eventually, they were able to install their puppet government after anti-Russian rioting provided an excuse for more oppression. But it took the Soviets eight months to achieve their goals in the face of spontaneous civilian resistance, versus the two or three days it would have taken them to overpower the Czech military. If the civilian defense had been carefully preplanned, Sharp believes, the Czechs might have held off complete Soviet control for much longer — perhaps indefinitely.

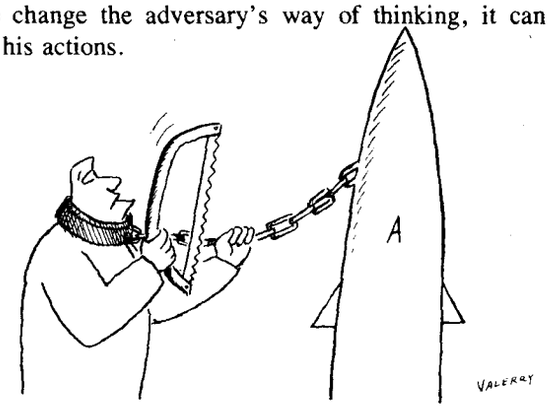
In part two, *The Methods of Nonviolent Action* ($4.95, 368 pp.), Sharp discusses 198 different kinds of actions used during nonviolent campaigns. Some of these are clever (in 1968 the Czechs removed street signs to confuse invading troops), some are bizarre (protest disrobings), most are commonplace (protest marches and strikes). Some are practices by single persons (speak-ins, fasting), others by entire nations (boycotts, embargoes). Sharp admits his list is far from exhaustive.

Part three, *The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action* ($5.95, 480 pp.), illustrates why Sharp has been called the Clausewitz of nonviolent warfare. Taking an almost military approach to the study of strategy and tactics, he talks about the importance of timing, the choice of weapons, geographical and physical elements. Sharp develops at length a concept of power which is as simple as it is profound: People are the source of all power. When the citizenry withdraws its cooperation, the government crumbles.

THE IDEA that power comes out of the barrel of a gun is a myth, says Sharp. Rather than viewing tyrants as monolithic pillars of granite that need to be destroyed with explosive force, we should see them as pathetically fragile figureheads that can be toppled by simply undercutting their base of support. All governments, and especially oppressive ones, have inherent weaknesses that naturally contribute to their ineffectiveness and limit their control and longevity. Often these weaknesses are related to dissension within the ranks of the ruler's agents and a reluctance to carry out orders. When a government is faced with massive popular nonviolent opposition, those cracks in the bureaucracy tend to widen. An effective resistance would concentrate its strongest weapons against the ruler's most vulnerable points.

When governments go on the offensive, using violent measures, they often experience difficulty in suppressing nonviolent resistance. They experience what Sharp calls "political jujitsu." The violence rebounds against the aggressor by strengthening the resolve of the resisting group, alienating previously neutral parties, and increasing sympathy and support for the victims. Morale problems can develop among troops and police who have the distasteful job of shooting or beating nonviolent resisters.

In *Dynamics* Sharp also discusses the three ways a nonviolent campaign can be successful. The first is conversion. Gandhians and many religious groups insist that converting the opponent to their point of view — winning their hearts and minds — is the only true victory. The second, accommodation, occurs when the opponent doesn't agree with the resisters, but decides it is too costly to continue to fight. (Accommodation is probably the most common path to victory.) The third is coercion, achieved through nonviolence: against his will, the opponent is forced to concede because his power base has been dissolved. Thus, even when a nonviolent campaign is unable to change the adversary's way of thinking, it can influence his actions.



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The Politics of Nonviolent Action does not explore in depth the possibility of using nonviolent sanctions for national defense. Recently Sharp spoke at Whittier College as part of a Quaker-sponsored seminar about national security. He called for the development of a functional substitute for war: a way to exercise power that is less destructive to society and human values. He rejected disarmament, world government, socialism, even pacifism, declaring "none of these are adequate today to address our problems in these extreme forms which they have taken." We should not expect mass conversions to pacifism or an outbreak of universal altruism, he said. With nonviolent struggle, however, there is no need to wait for participants to adopt a new set of moral values. People can (and do) use nonviolence to gain political goals without espousing a "turn the other cheek" philosophy in their everyday lives. Building on our natural abilities to be stubborn, obnoxious, and incompetent, he said, we can develop nonviolent strategies for national defense.

Sharp admitted that adoption of civilian defense by the United States, if it ever happens, is a long way off. Americans would first need to accept a narrower definition of national security. Many of the questions from the audience demonstrated the gulf between the public's perception of U.S. security needs and the capabilities of civilian-based defense (CBD). Some examples:

Q: *Without a military, how could the U.S. project its power globally in order to preserve its supply of resources?*

A: It could not. Preparations for CBD would have to include developing a high degree of self-sufficiency through stockpiling and other means.

Q: *How could we defend our allies with CBD?*

A: We could not. They would have to learn to take care of their own defenses.

Q: *If a country adopts CBD, won't it be vulnerable to nuclear attack?*

A: Perhaps, but there is no defense against nuclear weapons, and it is the nations with large offensive militaries that are most likely to be targeted. Nations with CBD would threaten no one.

AFTER THE LECTURE, I met with Sharp for an interview. "Do you think we will see the end of war in our lifetime?" I asked. "Maybe not in mine," he replied. But he said he felt there will definitely be some exciting developments in the next few years. Sharp hypothesized that the smaller Western European countries will take the lead in adopting CBD. A nation would first develop a limited CBD capacity alongside their military. Then, as citizens become more comfortable and proficient with CBD, the military could slowly be phased out. This process is called transarmament. Sharp told me that the Netherlands has already approved funding to study certain aspects of what they call "social defense," while the Swedish cabinet has authorized a commission to prepare a plan for incorporating nonviolent resistance into Sweden's defense program. Sharp predicts that Sweden will adopt a limited civilian defense plan within two or three years, and there could be several cases of full transarmament in the next twenty to thirty years.

How would a nation prepare for CBD? One goal of preparation would be to prevent the mass bewilderment, uncertainty, and passivity that often occurs during an invasion. Citizens would be trained in nonviolent tactics and to function without a centralized leadership. A corps of defense workers could be established to coordinate different aspects of the resistance. Stockpiling of food, fuel, and other essentials might be encouraged, and contingency plans drawn up to relocate some of the population to rural areas where control would be more difficult. Mutual nonviolent defense treaties could be implemented between nations to help out with international boycotts and embargoes. Some experts have even suggested nonviolent "war games" to carry out local or nationwide practice drills.

Of course, not all societies are ready for transarmament. Before converting to CBD, a nation with highly centralized industries would probably need to disperse its production facilities, making it more difficult for adversaries to gain control of the economic infrastructure. The best candidates for transarmament are countries with healthy, harmonious societies. But even the most stable nations would find it beneficial to improve the quality of life for all segments of the population in order to insure a unified civilian resistance. A country adopting CBD would in effect eliminate the traditional conflict between guns and butter. Imagine a future world in which a defense build-up consists of improving social welfare programs for minorities!

While interest in Europe is high (a number of smaller political parties are advocating CBD research as part of their platforms), civilian defense is practically unheard of in the United States. Nevertheless, recent developments indicate that awareness is on the rise. Last summer Harvard's Center for International Affairs established the Program on Nonviolent Sanctions in Conflict and Defense to do research and policy studies. Dr. Sharp heads the project, which is the first of it kind in the world. In Omaha, a new organization called the Association for Transarmament Studies facilitates research, discussion, and public eduction about CBD in the U.S.

Throughout the Whittier College lecture and interview Sharp appeared to take great pains to present an amoral image. For example, when I asked if he thought violence was ever justified, he replied, "I really don't deal with the question of justification . . . it's not one that interests me." I was curious why he did not like being referred to as a pacifist. Pacifism is a personal moral position, he said, and does nothing to offer a practical alternative to war. He described himself as a researcher and writer who has come upon an important idea which is beginning to generate a lot of interest.

Yet years ago Sharp also spent nine months in jail as a conscientious objector, and he is personally opposed to war and violence. It seems he is concerned that being characterized as a "peacenik" will hurt his credibility with more mainstream groups, or lead to the impression that nonviolent resistance is

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for pacifists only. Sharp sincerely believes that CBD can stand on its own as a practical, effective alternative to war. As he put it, we may be able to give up military weapons for the same reason we gave up bows and arrows — not because they are wicked and immoral — but because we have discovered a better weapons system.

THE CONCEPT of CBD is very new. Sharp does not advocate transarmament for any nation at this point. What is needed, he says, is hard-headed research by both governmental and non-governmental institutions to determine its feasibility, and develop and refine strategy and tactics to increase effectiveness. "The nonviolent technique," Sharp writes, is "an underdeveloped political technique, probably at the stage comparable to violent group conflict several thousand years ago."

On the need for more research into nonviolent resistance, Sharp and the U.S. bishops are in complete agreement. In their letter the bishops write: "Nonviolent means of resistance to evil deserve much more study and consideration than they have thus far received." But Sharp and the bishops would seem to disagree on a key point. The bishops state that the objective of nonviolent resistance is "to seek the good of the other. Blunting the aggression of an adversary or oppressor would not be enough. The goal is winning the other over, making the adversary a friend." Sharp, the pragmatist, would counter that the only goal of nonviolent action must be victory. Converting the opponent is all well and good if it should occur, but there are times when this may be impossible, and we must not rule out the more common forms of victory: accommodation and coercion.

This is an important point because if the only objective is "making the adversary a friend," then certain tactics could not be used for fear of alienating the opponent, thus limiting the effectiveness of CBD. And, to play a significant part in a Christian theology of peace, CBD must not only help reduce the level of violence in the world, it must also prove an effective method of struggle against oppression and injustice. Until then, even most moral and well-intentioned Christians will not feel comfortable in renouncing violent forms of struggle.

In the past, Christians faced with evil and injustice have often had to choose between two distasteful alternatives: submit, or resist with force of arms. But if a system of nonviolent sanctions can be developed that is as effective as violence, perhaps there is a way out of this dilemma. As the bishops state, "We believe work to develop nonviolent means of fending off aggression and resolving conflict best reflects the call of Jesus both to love and to justice." And later they write, "Nonviolent resistance offers a common ground of agreement for those individuals who choose the option of Christian pacifism even to the point of accepting the need to die rather than kill and those who choose the option of lethal force allowed by the theology of just war."

The Catholic bishops are not the only religious body to recognize the potential importance of civilian defense. The United Methodist church has adopted a resolution calling for more study on CBD, and there is interest among some evangelicals. What is needed is for Christians who are concerned about the increasing violence of modern warfare to encourage research into nonviolent methods of resistance. Gene Sharp believes the possibility now exists to deliberately contribute to a new stage in human history, leading perhaps to the "transformation of politics and the justifiable restoration of hope."

SEX EDUCATION IS ONLY THE LATEST EXAMPLE

The question they never ask

FRANK ZEPEZAUER

"WE SHOULD HAVE compulsory sex education in the public schools," says Dean William Fern of Mt. Holyoke College in *Commonweal* [June 19, 1981]. "Such education," he continues, "must stress the indispensable values of responsibility, fidelity, and love in sexual relationships. Needless to say, only a certain type of teacher would be effective in these courses."

FRANK ZEPEZAUER *teaches English at Menlo-Atherton High School in California.*

Needless to say, Fern does not ask where we will find that certain type of teacher. That's a question social reformers seldom consider when they ask public schools to install expensive programs aimed at reshaping attitudes. His failure to ask the question reflects our ambivalence toward tax-supported schools: on the one hand, they are the cause of our problems; on the other hand, the solution.

Yet, whether we are liberals calling for up-to-date courses in sexuality or conservatives demanding Judeo-Christian moral training, we must first ask, "Where will we find enough good teachers to do the job?" Several reasons compel our looking at the question and its implications.

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Fern's "certain type" of sex educator points to the most obvious. What should such a teacher be like? At the very least, well-informed about the biology and psychology of sex, sensitive to its cultural context, astutely diplomatic regarding its role in competing moral systems, able to maintain adult composure while working with immature students on the most personal and volatile of subjects. Could we find such teachers? Probably. Could we find enough to insure strong programs throughout the country? Probably not.

Even during the prosperous fifties when many districts could recruit their share of talent, the sheer magnitude of public education confounded efforts to keep standards high. There were 4 million teachers, many of them very good, many others reasonably competent. But such large numbers also meant that more than a few did not pass muster.

Those years were good only in comparison to what followed when public confidence plummeted, tax support shriveled, and good talent escaped to other professions. Today's critics speak of the "failure of the schools" as if they reported undisputed fact. Yet their overwrought assessment may yet prove prophetic. Enrollment in teacher education programs has fallen by half since 1973. Many of those remaining form the lower half of academic ability with SAT scores falling 48 points below the national average in math and 35 points in verbal skills.

In spite of these disturbing portents, we have initiated any number of multi-million-dollar sex education programs. As usual, a few experimental courses may show promise, and a few districts may boast successful programs, but elsewhere we risk putting children into highly sensitive courses taught by teachers of average or below average competence.

Suppose, nevertheless, we could find enough of Fern's special type of teacher. We would still pay a heavy price because the superteachers needed for properly handled sex education courses would no longer be teaching math or science or English. We've been robbing academic programs in that way for years. In the early fifties, for instance, we touted school counselors as the answer to many scholastic and social problems. Those new specialist educators were supposed to help kids function better in the classroom and deal more effectively with personal problems and career choices. Many counselors performed as advertised, but there were never enough of them and even the best faced client loads exceeding two hundred. Worse yet, good counselors had once been good teachers, the kind with a knack for relating with the often puzzling teen-ager.

During those years we also lost many good teachers to administration whose ranks swelled because of the ever increasing regulations imposed by state and federal programs. If some district's sex education program grows large enough, you can bet it too will have a "coordinator" who has left the classroom to process papers.

This tendency to lose teachers to non-academic duties is built into the public school system. In colleges, on the other hand, many administrators keep active in their disciplines. In Europe even the headmaster of secondary schools often teaches a course or two. But in America where the concept of educating the total child has taken hold, any program that services some need of the student qualifies as education. If we recruit thousands of able teachers to teach and administer sex education programs, we will therefore take them away from courses where they are needed.

We should note in passing another cost. If sex education diverts good teachers from academic courses, it also diverts needed funds. During a period when many of us demand a return to the basics, teachers of a basic called writing find increasingly large class loads. In pro-education Palo Alto, California, for example, composition teachers who only five years ago met 100 students now average over 150. Those teachers were told that budget cuts forced the overload. Yet they learned that millions of dollars nationally will be ticketed not only for sex education, but also for public nurseries, bilingual education, special help for the handicapped, and racial integration. These are worthwhile programs, but from an academic perspective they should be installed only after the fundamental curriculum is in good shape. However, that's not the way it works. Even though since 1912 students of the writing problem have recommended no more than 100 students for composition teachers, in every succeeding decade some pressing social program has elbowed its way forward to top priority. During the eighties these teachers are being told once more to wait a little while longer, just long enough for us to straighten out America's youth on their sexuality.

The cost therefore is high. Even if all sex education teachers were as good as required, their courses as effective as hoped, their support from the public as broad as possible, we would still pay a stiff price. We might have spared ourselves the cost and argument had we first asked, "Where will we find enough good teachers?"

Anne Kilmer

Flannery O'Connor

She died, you know, of some dreadful skin thing,
Shut up from the light,
A mushroom growth lupus became her,
Her burning glass
And her people, the strange people who made the rules,
The clever people, the scoundrels, the vague
Incessant children of her dream?
Why, they died, too,

Left the dusty clay roads, the backwoods,
The peacock-clouded fields, the tenements,
Rose from the muddy rivers that spoke for their Savior,
Followed her into the dark.

Who would have predicted such loyalty
In constructs built of pen and ink,
Sepia
And gall.

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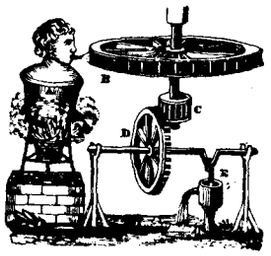
WILL WE RETHINK A MAJOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM?



'Voc ed' drifts along

JEREMIAH BARUCH

IT'S A BONE-CHILLING March afternoon, and he has already made his usual stop at the employment office. He's got time on his hands: nine months and seven days since his high school graduation and no job in sight. He is poor, black, and unemployed, along with almost half of his fellow blacks of 16-19 years. Yet he once had hope, a lot of it, and not too long ago.

He graduated with good grades and high recommendations in his school's vocational education printing program. But the equipment he learned to operate — quite skillfully — was no longer being used in most print shops or press rooms in the town. He found that any job using older equipment had a waiting list of printers with years of experience.

This story is like hundreds of other cases that have been related to members of Congress, pointing to a need to modernize vocational education programs, particularly for the "under-served" of the nation. Hearings on the "Voc Ed" Act were held throughout the Ninety-seventh Congress by the House Subcommittee on Elementary, Secondary, and Vocational Education, ending with twenty volumes that detailed the plight of the disadvantaged, the handicapped, the displaced homemakers, among others, who have not always been served well by the best of intentions in vocational training.

The problems arising from implementation of current "voc ed" programs pose a considerable challenge to members of the House and Senate as they proceed to reauthorize the Vocational Education Act — which had been extended to the end of fiscal 1984 without amendment in the last Congress. On March 8, the House passed H.R. 4164, a five-year extension of the Act and the first major overhaul in eight years. On March 1, the Senate Labor and Human Resources Subcommittee on Education reported its measure, S. 2341, to the full committee, which has twice canceled scheduled consideration because of still-unresolved conflicts among major Senate factions.

This legislative activity comes in the shadow of recent congressional funding cuts, prompted by a concerted but unsuccessful administration effort to curtail the program severely. Congress had reduced the "Voc Ed" Act's appropriations to a funding level of $732 million for fiscal 1983, 7 percent below the fiscal 1980 amount. The president's FY 85 budget proposes to consolidate most existing vocational education programs, and to fund them at the same level that they received last year — $742 million.

The administration has retreated, however, from its much tougher stance in last year's FY 84 budget, when it proposed to consolidate vocational and adult education programs into a state block grant and fund the combined program at $500 million — a cut of almost 40 percent. Hill receptivity to the president's request was indicated by the administration's being unable to locate a sponsor for its bill in either the House or the Senate during the Ninety-seventh Congress. As one seasoned cynic remarked, since a willing sponsor (with a photographed handshake and a pair of cuff links) can be found for almost any executive-initiated measure, the inability of the administration in the last Congress to persuade any member to introduce its original proposal is politically remarkable. It is apparently difficult to find a member willing to be highly visible in opposing the phalanx of interests involved in the vocational education bill.

As one of the longest standing examples of federal education aid to the states, current vocational programs trace their federal beginnings to the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 — which authorized grants, in the form of a permanent appropriation, to the states for vocational education in public schools below the college level. Students were to be assisted in learning skills in a wide range of fields from agriculture and home economics to industry and trade. (The permanent appropriation of the Smith-Hughes Act is still part of the "Voc Ed" Act's funding.)

The authors of the 1916 House report expressed concern that the aspirations of many young people were denied in an educational world where the only choice was preparation for college — and then only for the few — and where the early schooling drop-out rate was alarming. (It's nice to know that there are some continuities in the life of public policy.)

President Wilson urged passage of the vocational education bill in his message to Congress on December 5, 1916: "It contains plans which affect all interests and all parts of the country and I am sure there is no legislation now pending before the Congress whose passage the country waits with more thoughtful approval or greater impatience to see a great and admirable thing set in the way of being done." Shortly

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thereafter. Congress approved the Smith-Hughes Act, but what has happened to the issue's importance since? Where is the national clamor and presidential urgency for the revision and passage of the "voc ed" bill today?

PART OF THE explanation is that vocational education is financed primarily by state and local monies. In fiscal 1981, the most recent year for which figures are available, the federal efforts amounted to only about 10 percent of the $7.3 billion spent on vocational education.

An amalgam of legislation has accrued since 1916; the current federal programs were provided their basic framework by the Vocational Education Act of 1963 (introduced in the House, by the way, by Kentucky Representative Carl Perkins, now Education and Labor Committee Chairman), which was amended in 1968, and again in 1976.

At present, various federal vocational funds allocated to the states are required to be set aside for national priorities established by Congress. There are nine program components, the two largest, by far, being Basic Grants (funded in FY 84 at $567 million) and Program Improvement Supportive Services ($99.6 million in FY 84). From these, 10 percent is required to be set aside for the handicapped, 15 percent for postsecondary institutions (the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges was reported to be, along with the American Vocational Association, one of the three education groups which drafted H.R. 4164), 20 percent for the disadvantaged, and an amount not to exceed 1 percent for vocational programs for Indians. From the funds set aside for the disadvantaged, a percentage of funds equal to the percentage of people of limited English-speaking ability is required to be set aside, to be used for those people. There are other funds to be set aside from other program components. The practice is so common that the term set-aside (or setaside) is used for these provisions.

The groups with vested interests in the set-aside provisions largely succeeded in blocking the major effort at overhauling the "Voc Ed" Act, the attempt at better targeting of federal funds, particularly towards the training needs of the economy. H.R. 4164, in its original form, dropped the "set-asides" and established a separate program for students with "special needs"; more funds were also supposed to be directed to postsecondary and adult vocational training.

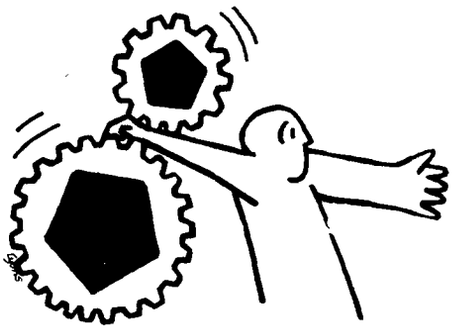
These provisions were removed, however, in House subcommittee markup by an amendment of Chairman Perkins, which retained current provisions and their set-asides and, in addition, required states to set aside another 5 percent of their grants for sex-equity programs. The last addition was an entirely new set-aside for activities designed to overcome sexual bias and provide support services for women in vocational education. Attempts to expand funds for postsecondary and adult vocational training were thwarted, notwithstanding the dictates of the job market, because advocacy groups for the disadvantaged and the handicapped had been dissuaded from pushing for larger percentages for their set-asides only if the postsecondary set-aside was not expanded.

In the Senate subcommittee, most of Sen. Dan Quayle's attempts to give states more flexibility in dealing with set-asides were reportedly rebuffed by such defenders as Sen. Lowell Weicker for the handicapped and Sen. Robert Stafford for the disadvantaged. But Quayle won approval for his amendments to drop the set-asides for home economics and counseling. Certain senators are so fond of set-asides for the "under-served" that in at least one measure introduced, the set-asides exceeded 100 percent.

The House-passed measure creates two new programs that are the chamber's prime vocational education effort to address the training needs of the economy. The first program provides grants to the states to train persons in high technology fields, through partnership with industry. For the first time, ties have been established between the business community and education in the development of the vocational education curriculum. Participating businesses are to provide 25 percent of the cost of the training programs, through financial assistance or in-kind contributions. The second program makes funds available to states for adult training, retraining, and employment development. Both of these programs are to be closely coordinated with those operated under the Job Training Partnership Act.

To win support of budget-conscious members, the House dropped any specific spending ceilings and authorized "such sums" as Congress deems necessary. In its recommendation to the House Budget Committee on March 6, the Education and Labor Committee proposed $883.8 million for vocational education in fiscal 1985. A major question facing Congress is whether the current and proposed level of federal funds is sufficiently targeted, given the limited funds available. And if the funding is deemed inadequate, why is it so difficult to build a consensus that much greater support for vocational education is necessary for the country's economic and social well-being?

Aaron Benavot of Stanford may point to a major reason in his article, "The Rise and Decline of Vocational Education" (*Sociology of Education*, April 1983). He traces a global pattern in the growth of vocational education in every major region of the world up to about 1950; he observes that the vocational share of secondary education has declined consistently in most countries since then (Eastern Europe excepted): "The rise and fall of vocational education coincides with a shifting mandate for secondary schooling — a movement away from the production of differentiated workers that fit a differentiated economy into the production of more standardized citizenry in line with the egalitarian demands of nation-building and citizenship privileges."



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Benavot sees this trend as fostered by a worldwide acceptance of an educational ideology of "individualism," i.e., education ought to meet the multi-faceted and evolving needs of the individual. The transmission of specific technical skills in vocational education is seen to be "based on a narrow conception of individual capacities and abilities." Perhaps additional impetus is given to this view by rapidly changing work environments resulting from technology.

The vocational education community continues to debate whether "employability" rather than employment is the better means for assessing the success of programs. But employment offers a readily measurable yardstick for taxpayer dollars, and the business community's increasing interest in vocational programs generally promotes this perspective as well. Yet if one takes a look at the nation's unemployment rate, much less at that of the young or of minorities, one realizes that, even by this measure, Congress and its national educational policy, so far, falls short.

Screen

WHY Y?

DIANE KURYS STRIKES BACK

ONE SCENE suggests both the charm and danger of *Entre Nous*. Sophie, the daughter of one of its heroines, is performing an imitation of Maurice Chevalier at a school play in the 1950s. With his voice on a recording of "La Pomme" in the background and a Chevalier mask on her face, the little girl dances away with cute but awkward gestures and waves an apple with a herky-jerky motion in the air. The scene is delightful, a mark of director Diane Kurys's supple vision of ordinary things, a vision that has made her into one of the leading female directors of our time.

But the scene is more significant, a kind of revenge for Chevalier's sexist condescension in films like *Gigi*, and revenge, as moralists have warned, can easily go too far. At the end of *Entre Nous* we learn that the film is partly autobiographical, that Sophie resembles Diane Kurys herself, standing on a beachfront porch and watching her mother coolly inform her father that their marriage is over. Like Chevalier, the man is dismissed, here not with laughter but silence and an icy stare. Behind both gestures, moreover, is a pattern of scenes that makes not for feminism but homophobia, the film's dark side. The general praise for the movie thus at least suggests one thing: we are not yet as attuned to female insensitivity as to male.

In part this is because the basic story in *Entre Nous* and the surface texture are so seductive and alluring. It concerns not just Sophie's mother Lena, but her friend, Madeleine, two French housewives who leave inadequate husbands for each other's company. Lena (Isabelle Huppert) and Madeleine (Miou-Miou) meet at the school play, and soon find in each other more mutual help and support than they get from their bumbling or loutish spouses. "Madeleine helps me live, I can't breathe without her," Lena passionately explains, the traditional line normally reserved for the other *man* in a French triangle. But despite hints of lesbian affection there is no *fatale* in Lena's attraction to Madeleine: all they want to do is set up shop together, literally. Though her husband Michel (Guy Marchand) wrecks their first boutique in a jealous rage, the pair regroup and conquer. "Life can begin again at thirty," Madeleine explains, a line that brought knowing approval from many way over thirty in the audience.

So far, so good: *Entre Nous* on this level is a tale of grit and determination. The predominant style, moreover — the concentration on brief vignettes where significance emerges with understated, laconic emphasis — is as sensuous and light as nouvelle cuisine. By contrast, there are some scenes in the early part of the movie — detailing how the women first met their husbands in World War II — whose epic grandeur and shrill action indicate that Kurys could try her hand, equally, at another kind of movie and succeed grandly there as well. The problem is not in Kurys's art, or pride in Sophie's mother and her friend, but a series of clues that show us that the director — for all her sophistication — does not know her Freudian slip is showing.

Take, for example, the presentation of the husbands, especially Michel. He meets Lena, a Belgian Jew, as she awaits deportation east at the beginning of World War II. He serves in her camp as a legionnaire, marries her, and escapes with her over the Alps to Italy and relative safety. He establishes a garage after the war and showers his wife with middle-class respectability. But he is seen as unsuitable for Lena, playing football with the daughters at a picnic, for example, when she is trying to read. He is a hard-working, mostly loving, swarthy vulgarian; as Madeleine whispers to Lena when she first meets him, "You're not made for each other." She meanwhile puts up with Costa, an underemployed actor who peddles art in his spare time (it turns out to be stolen) or hijacked shirts (they turn out to be sleeveless). To paraphrase Hobbes a bit, the two husbands are vulgar, either brutish or nincompoop, and short — a physical side of the contrast to their wives that has, perhaps, racial significance. There are some affectionate scenes between Michel and his two daughters, but they are never squared with his image as a poor husband.

Of course, perhaps *these* husbands were *this* way, and the film merely a faithful record. But there appear to be other reasons besides fact for their shoddy treatment. Take, for example, Madeleine's little boy, who first appears as a reluctant Indian chief at the school play, a passive contrast to little Sophie's energy. When the two families race cars on a country road, he naturally gets sick and his parents have to stop to let him vomit. The most telling incident occurs when he is unable to unlock a bathroom stall while his mother, Lena, and her two daughters wait outside observing what a ninny he is. Of course, perhaps he *was*. But one wonders what he is doing in this movie — why the misfortunes of a little boy deserve such development in a film primarily about the parents of the *other*

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children. To focus on such incidents makes this no ordinary autobiography, but it is, unfortunately, part of Kurys's total world view. To emphasize male impotence in a quasi-phallic setting is her ultimate comment on just how bad the y-chromosome really is. Even the next generation of males is klutzy, or at least must be remembered that way. Thank heaven for little girls.

In stereotyping half the human race, *Entre Nous* is really no worse than most other recent movies about divorce — *Kramer vs. Kramer, Ordinary People, Smash Palace, Shoot the Moon,* or *An Unmarried Woman* — most of which blame either men or women, but never both, for the breakup. Indeed, the dismissal of the tearful spouse at the end of *Entre Nous* parallels the dismissal at the end of *Kramer vs. Kramer,* only this time the husband is punished, not the wife. *Entre Nous* thus proves that the French can make a divorce movie, our modern anti-romance, with as many half-truths as Americans. *Entre Nous*, like other films in this genre, is engaging and provocative; it is also unconsciously sexist.

Entre Nous was the official French nominee at the Oscars; each non-English speaking nation is allowed to nominate a film through their own version of a national film board. *Entre Nous* was preferred over *The Return of Martin Guerre,* a magnificent film reduced to a costume citation by the nominating process. *Entre Nous,* after all, is so *au courant*; *Martin Guerre,* set in the sixteenth century, was apparently adjudged passé. Ironically, the latter film concerns a warmer, more inclusive feminism than Kurys offers us here.

There is, perhaps, an even greater problem with the movie. Sophie's father's last name is Korski, presumably something like the origin of Diane Kurys's own name. In *Entre Nous,* names play a key role in the sexual politics. When Michel marries Lena, she doesn't know his last name; when she finds out, she is indignant (even though he just busted her from internment through the marriage). Lena exclaims against the obvious Jewishness of Korski, adding that, with her maiden name of "Weber," they could at least pass for German. Like so much else in *Entre Nous,* this is factually true; its underlining, however, makes it psychologically suspicious. Lena doesn't look as Jewish as her husband; like Madeleine, she is almost Nordic in appearance. Madeleine's husband, like Michel, is dark and short. Diane Kurys's attitude to males, in brief, seems related to her attitude to southern races; they are not pretty. In revealing this, neither is the movie.

TOM O'BRIEN

(Tom O'Brien, one of the guest critics currently reviewing movies for Commonweal, *teaches at the Manhattan School of Music.)*

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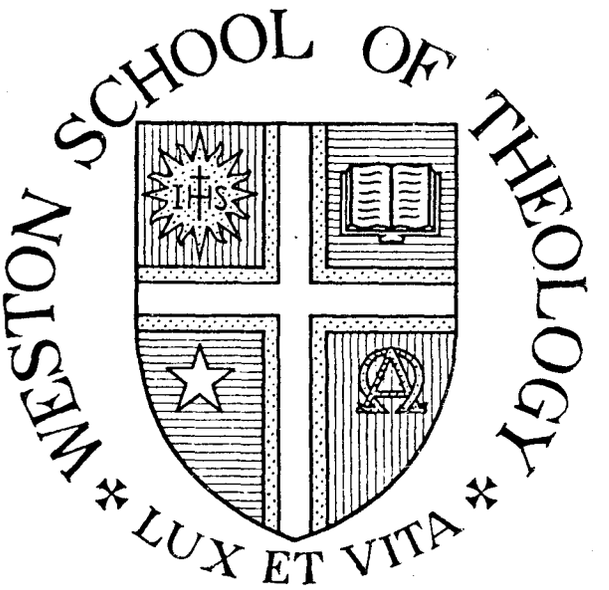

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Books: THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL

WHAT is the American school? What should it be? Is it the "institute for individual and community development" Mortimer Adler mockingly projected, in 1941, as the dream of the progressives: "a glorified school which would be all things to all men, regulating everything from the prenatal care of the child to his vocational preparation, and solving the social problems of the community on the side?"

In 1984, the answer is, more or less, yes. Most striking in the current surge of interest in schools in general, and in the high school in particular, is agreement on this point. Even those who would pare back the high school to the traditional academic task proposed for it in 1893 by the "Committee of Ten" acknowledge that in the intervening years the high school has been shaped by the progressive movement, the industrialization of American society, racial integration, and transformations in family life into a social institution seen by its users as required to "solve the social problems of the community," and often not "on the side."

These recent studies and books also agree, however, on the need to move back to Adler's goal, the heart of the school, "the provision of intellectual training." Adler himself, veteran of the debate for more than forty years, has restated in bold terms the 'essentialist' case in *The Paideia Proposal*, and has stuck to his vision even through the politically sensitive regrouping in response to criticism in the follow-up book *Paideia: Problems and Possibilities*. Those who condemn Adler's call for one-track academic training for all students as the "Peter Pan Proposal" (the title of a critical article in the *Harvard Educational Review*) will also look with limited enthusiasm on Theodore Sizer's call, in his book, *Horace's Compromise*, for a core curriculum and a high school which abandons age-grading, sports, vocational training, and other social services in order to prepare its students for "exhibitions" which will rigorously test academic learning before the diploma is granted.

THE PAIDEIA PROPOSAL
AN EDUCATIONAL MANIFESTO
Mortimer J.Adler
Macmillan, $2.95, 84 pp.

PAIDEIA PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES
A CONSIDERATION OF QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE PAIDEIA PROPOSAL
Mortimer J. Adler
Macmillan, $3.95, 113 pp.

HIGH SCHOOL
A REPORT ON SECONDARY EDUCATION IN AMERICA
Ernest L. Boyer
Harper & Row, $15, 363 pp.

A PLACE CALLED SCHOOL
PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE
John I. Goodlad
McGraw-Hill, $18.95, 396 pp.

THE GOOD HIGH SCHOOL
PORTRAITS OF CHARACTER AND CULTURE
Sara Lawrence Lightfoot
Basic Books, $19.95, 399 pp.

HORACE'S COMPROMISE
THE DILEMMA OF THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL
Theodore R. Sizer
Houghton Mifflin, $16.95, 241 pp.

John Ratté

But even the more modest proposals for reform — notably the sensible and optimistic overview of John Goodlad, former Dean of the Graduate School of Education at UCLA, and the comprehensive and detailed proposals offered by Ernest Boyer in the book which summarizes the work of the Carnegie Foundation's Special Commission for the Advancement of Teaching — are at one with Adler and Sizer in calling for reforms which will better the chances of all young Americans to learn not only the "new basics" for which the Presidential commissioners called in *A Nation At Risk*, but learn how to learn, and how to continue to learn as adults. Sizer and Adler devote the most time to what are, and what ought to be, the modes of learning in our schools. Boyer too wants more "coaching" (focused on skills), more Socratic dialogue, and less of the front-of-the-classroom-teaching-by-telling. Vignettes in all these books show the lecture to be the norm — often the deadening norm — in American schools.

The books under discussion also mostly agree in their lists of subjects to be taught and learned. They all insist that improvements must come in individual schools. None of them sees panaceas for our weak schools — to the degree they are portrayed as weak — in nationwide curriculum innovations, new school structures, new ways of using time, or new ways of grouping students — all initiatives which seemed to offer hope in earlier decades.

Yet another common characteristic can be noted: the studies do not force the reader or would-be reformer to make a choice between progressive and conservative pedagogical philosophies. They are synthetic and pragmatic in their suggestions that a mixture of teaching strategies and materials is best, and that judgments about what goes into the mixture, and in what proportions, ought to be left to the people in the schools. This generalization is true, I think, even for the more programmatic and structured curricular models presented by Boyer and Adler. "Every tub on its own bottom," says Goodlad, emphasizing that the major role in defining and implementing curricular change must be given to the principal and the school.

On the other hand, the books are in agreement on what they would purge from high schools — most notably the proliferation of electives, "the trivialization of the curriculum," and the more limiting forms of tracking — and in the

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clear call for better teachers, pay, and professional development.

Finally, all of the curricular components of these reports are energized by a democratic vision. They all argue that every American youth is entitled to as much academic opportunity as the individual can claim to use and as much advancement as achievement warrants. All present a variant of what Boyer calls "a single track for all." Vocational education, pre-collegiate courses, and everything else in the comprehensive high school is to be there in various sequences *after* all students have learned to read and write and think, and after some common core of ideas and facts has been transferred (or the attempt made) to all students.

It is not surprising that these books reflect, in structure and language and point of view, the previous as well as the current preoccupations of their authors. It is not damning with faint praise to say that Ernest Boyer's book is remarkably clear and well written for a commission study report. Goodlad's prose is denser; yet the reader is constantly surprised by the inspiring combination of deep love for students and schools and trenchant, even radical, proposals for change. It is typical of this experienced and deft politician of education that he should offer *two* versions of reform, one expressing what is do-able now, the other a near utopian vision of an education which embraces all aspects of civic life. ("Community education," he writes, "becomes not just schools opening up their facilities and extending their resources, but an ecosystem of institutions and agencies conscious of their responsibility for developing the knowledge, values, skills, and habits of a free people." And to end: "And indeed, education is as yet something more envisioned than practiced.")

Adler's writing has the same passionate certainty one can see in work spanning five decades. Sizer's experiences as a school head (Phillips Academy) and Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education are dominated by his historian's training, his detailed observations of the fifty-plus schools he visited, and a most felicitous and personal style. His mythical Horace Smith — the archetypal good teacher compromising with a system which places inordinate demands on his mind and heart, to say nothing of his time — is the figure around whom move students, principals, superintendents, in a dance Sizer would radically simplify in order to make it better. Among these studies Sara Lawrence Lightfoot takes to the extreme the personal and anthropological approach. Her adjectivally over-ripe "portraits" of six "good" schools are uneven in length, breadth, and depth of description. Generalizing throughout and in a concluding group portrayal, she reveals common concerns for academic competition, cultural and racial diversity and integration, autonomy and dignity in the lives of teachers, and styles of leadership in two private, two suburban, and two urban high schools. Best in the book are her descriptions of, and musing on, the role of the principal — reminding us that leadership in the individual school is another major theme of the reform movement now underway in all the states.

Is it likely that much noticeable change in what schools in general, and high schools in particular, teach will come from these books and reports? It is too early to tell. Schools in the Chicago and Atlanta systems have been designated as Paideia Project schools by school superintendents who were members of the Paideia group. At Brown, Sizer will be directing the Essential Schools Project, hoping for some five to ten schools to join in an experiment at reform which will focus on the triangle of the teacher, the student, and the material to be taught and learned. For all I know there are already a number of schools adopting the complex and precise "Four-Year Program" Boyer and his associates have proposed. Indeed, much of the formal change called for in the more schematic reports — principally by the Presidential Commission which authored *A Nation At Risk* — is already underway, and was underway even before the reports began to appear. Similarly, many of the numerical indicators of performance had begun to show an improvement at the very moment national attention began to focus on the crisis in the schools.

If the nation's high schools are to offer, and require, sound academic programs for *all* students, three things are necessary. First, support must come from the American public for this kind of education for all children. Parents — who are also voters and tax-payers — must be persuaded that the argument made by Mortimer Adler is true:

> We are politically a classless society. Our citizenry as a whole is our ruling class. We should, therefore, be an educationally classless society. The innermost meaning of social equality is: *substantially the same quality of life for all*. That

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calls for *the same quality of schooling for all.*

Adler's critics have rightly pointed out that schools do not so much mold society as mirror it. Adler's call may well be one for *social* reform, since inequities, however much they may be preserved by electives, vocational education, and tracking, are not created by schools. But if American citizens and parents believed this argument to be true (and political leaders could be found to make it so), they would provide the second requirement for decisive change — money. Money is required to give every community the schools of order and minimal beauty Goodlad and Sizer regrettably report missing in their travels about the land, and which Ms. Lightfoot found in abundance at St. Paul's and Milton. Money is required to produce the teaching equipment and texts teachers and students need. And above all, money is required to pay for the teaching of teachers, and to pay the teachers.

The third thing required is *the definition of the content* of the required academic program. Here the prospect is both hopeful and challenging. Hopeful because all the reports converge in proposing some kind of core curriculum for all students. Challenging because this convergence enables us to identify some deeper issues which must be addressed before the new academic program can be established in all our schools. For even if teachers all started their work at a salary of $50,000, and even if publishers could be guaranteed their profits by universal adoption of truly creative teaching materials, and all parents required high standards and homework and participated eagerly in all the special programs their schools would provide to enable the deficient learner to learn, nevertheless, America's university scholars and our master high school teachers would still have to begin the task of deciding on the content of a curriculum which might offer this country the possibility of an educated and civic-minded citizenry.

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The whys & the why nots

THE WHYS OF A PHILOSOPHICAL SCRIVENER

Martin Gardner

Quill, $12.95, 453 pp.

Dennis O'Brien

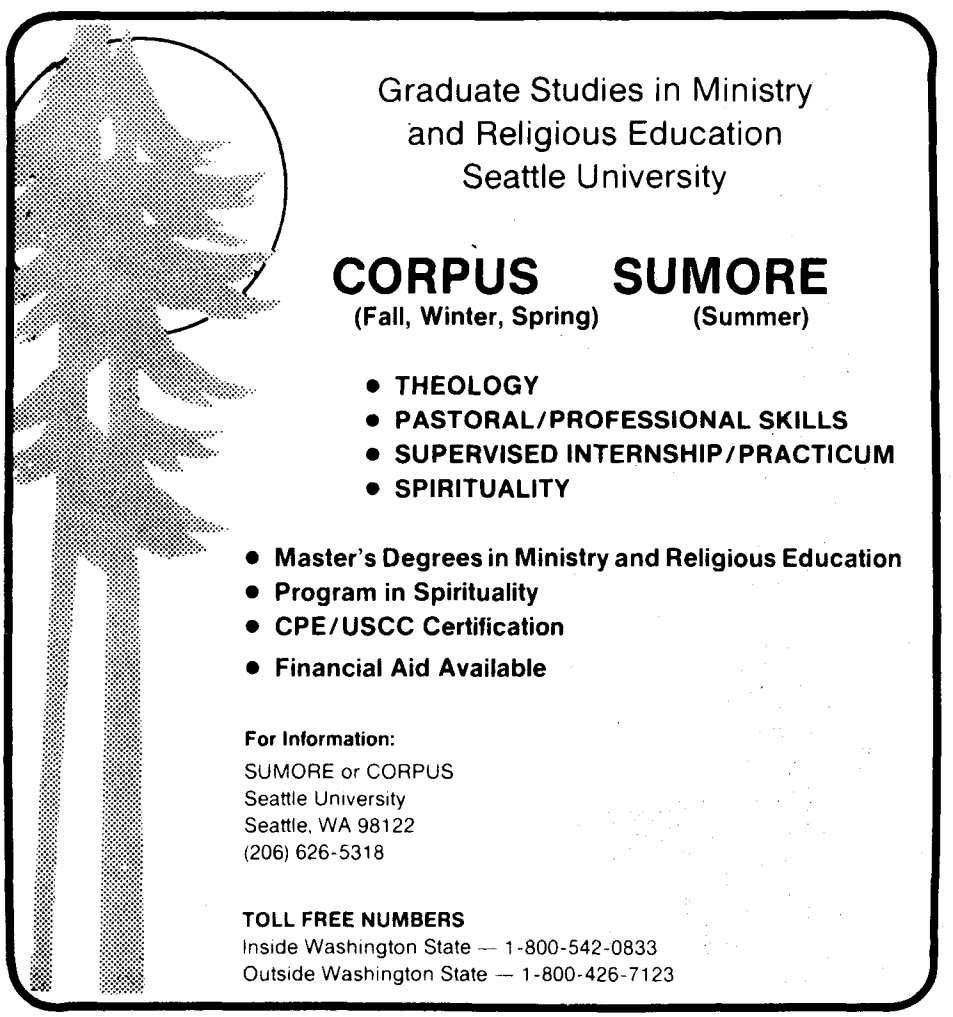
IT IS a noble life achievement to live long enough to be entitled to one's crotchets. Martin Gardner has attained that eminence. As the author of thirty five books, the long-time mathematics essayist for *Scientific American* has earned the prerogative of personal pronouncement. *The Whys of a Philosophical Scrivener* is the product of professional philosophical training (at the University of Chicago), a life of serious reading and a very orderly set of file cards. There are twenty one chapters each dealing with some heavy topic: Truth, Beauty, Liberty, Gods, et al., and one can catch the style of the book by noting Gardner's comments at the beginning of the chapter on evil:

> My notes on philosophy . . . are on file in rough chronological order. Over the decades I have followed the practice of attaching tiny metal flags of six colors to cards that relate to six metaphysical topics: God, immortality, free will, evil, altruism and the mystery of being. In going through my file cabinets . . . before writing this chapter I was surprised to note that the number of flags for evil diminished steadily with time.

It is surprising what one can conclude from reshuffling one's file flags!

I do not wish to suggest that this volume is a substitute for *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*; there is a consistent and sensible mind at work assembling the bits and pieces of philosophy and poetry arrayed beneath the flags. The mind is a surprising combination of Platonic mysticism and healthy common sense. That may seem an odd mixture and indeed it is. There is the down to earth Gardner exasperated at the nonsense of ESP, UFO's, and the other delights of the *National Enquirer*; then there is Brother Martin asserting faith in a personal God, prayer, and immortal life. Well, that is not quite correct. Gardner asserts that it is not irrational to hold to such beliefs while pointing out that what it means exactly to assert such beliefs is a virtual impenetrable mystery. One might characterize the philosophical project of the book as understanding clearing the way for faith — faith in ultimate mystery.

The clearing away function of the volume is expressed in the titles of the chapters all of which are expressed in the negative: Why I am not — a solipsist, a polytheist, a Marxist, etc. This *via negativa* is an effective instrument for eliminating a long string of philosophy's odder options. Gardner quotes with glee the famous letter of Mrs. Ladd-Franklin to Bertrand Russell about solipsism in which she stated her own firm allegiance to the doctrine and expressed her exasperation that "everybody else was not a solipsist." One of the author's consistent techniques is to confront some peculiarly extravagant intellectual conundrum like ethical relativism or determinism with the actual life position entailed by such a belief. He usually concludes that no matter how subtle the logic of the learned philosopher, the position is untenable. It is no wonder, then, that he finds much of value in William James and John Dewey. A splendid illustration of the value of such pragmatic thinking is expressed in the quotation which heads the chapter on ethical relativism. After all — or before all — the elegant arguments about the relativity of cultures and human values, Gardner thinks it worthwhile to remind



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us of the sign in an Oklahoma restaurant circa 1940: "It is better to be rich and healthy than poor and sick."

While I share Gardner's general view that when common sense and philosophy come into conflict, so much the worse for philosophy, I am left with a certain uneasiness about the "Why I am not . . . " approach to these issues. As Gardner knows so well from the history of science, the purchase we have on genuine knowledge is frail enough. He quotes in criticism a wrong-headed opinion of the great physicist, Michelson, in 1894: "The more important fundamental laws and facts of physical science have all been discovered, and these are all so firmly established that the possibility of their ever being supplanted in the consequence of new discoveries is exceedingly remote . . . " This on the eve of relativity and quantum theory. If it turns out to be easy now to proclaim "Why I am not a Newtonian" then it may be nothing at all to declare a deep disbelief in everything from psychokinesis to psychoanalysis. (Gardner is also not a Freudian.) While I applaud the general effort toward philosophical garbage removal, one must be careful to avoid throwing out the sapience with the slops.

The most obvious limitation of the negative approach is in the chapters on immortality. The negative can be a big help when we sense that the author will fall back on common sense; Dr. Johnson assaulting the table leg in refutation of idealism. But what common sense does one fall back on in the case of immortal life? Gardner suggests that it would not be irrational to believe in immortality because the world is really a lot more mysterious than one could imagine even in the best science fiction. To be sure. But at that level of enigmatic mystery what, if anything, is being asserted by the claim for immortality? One can claim that God loves us but if it is then asserted that the way in which he loves us is *absolutely* mysterious, what is the point of the initial proclamation? What would be different if he disdained us with some utterly mysterious disdain? In Christianity we believe in "mysteries" but as Gabriel Marcel once pointed out, Christian mysteries are as much a revelation as they are a piece of obscurity. The self is such a "mystery in broad daylight" — at once the easiest thing to know (myself) and the most obscure.

Gardner will not be put off at all by noting that his view is not Christian; he is by his own admission a "closet philosophical theist," no more and no less. *The Whys of a Philosophical Scrivener* is well named. This is a casual, ruminative set of elegant "scribbles." As Martin Gardner would be the first to note, he is not operating on the high tightrope of his masters Plato, Kant, or even William James. He ends the book by citing unashamedly his two favorite au-

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thors: G.K. Chesterton and H.G. Wells. He sympathizes with G.K.C.'s passion and H.G.W.'s keen appreciation of science. He wishes there were a head and heart which combined their strengths. Those who enjoy the wit and sturdy English clarity of those two authors will find Martin Gardner much to their taste.

Old scriptures, new categories

THE COVENANT
A READING
Jonathan Bishop
Templegate, $9.95, 458 pp.

FIVE GOSPELS
AN ACCOUNT OF HOW THE GOOD NEWS CAME TO BE
John C. Meagher
Winston, $24.50, $11.95 paper, 312 pp.

Pheme Perkins

BOTH BOOKS try to create new categories for understanding the Bible. Neither will be of much interest to advanced students. Bishop, an English professor attempting to engage in theology, creates an overarching set of abstract categories to encompass the entire Bible as covenant. Meagher, who teaches both theology and English, takes the opposite tack. He emphasizes the genuine diversity in the proclamations of "good news" that are found in the New Testament. Both on the literary and the theological level, Meagher's is the more successful book.

Bishop's insecurity with the biblical field not only leads to generalizations and rejection of far better scholars than he, but it also leads to presentation in a manner that can hardly be suited to the general reader. He is lost in the details of Pentateuchal sources and various theories of covenant, introducing terms that no average reader could understand. Bishop also writes in abstractions that lead to sentences that are impossible to decipher with any certainty. Certainly a non-academic reader would not have patience with the style of this book. Meagher, on the other hand, has a lively and engaging style that easily commands one's attention.

However, there are sections of Bishop's work which shed the dense abstraction and schematization. These would be the stuff of a work that could be as engaging as Meagher's. Bishop's literary analysis of the Gospel of Mark is generally lucid and filled with insights about the dynamic progress of the text. And the final section of the book, after an atrocious head trip about the break-up of the author's marriage, tells an engaging story of a sabbatical spent in a Catholic Worker house. Bishop's description of the persons on the soup line, the success and failure of systems of social services, the inevitable move to treat the activities of the House like a "business" all make provocative reading in the present-day climate of hostile debate about social services.

Bishop also moves convincingly from that experience to the discovery of a special kind of contemplation required of genuine Christian action in the world. This experience leads him to acknowledge the difficulty of wrestling with the world he has experienced on the presuppositions of a "result-oriented," calculating American psyche. Perhaps if these experiences had been more integrated into an understanding of what the Bible means in speaking of covenantal relationships in a world that is not just "nature and culture" but filled with the possibilities of the Spirit, the first 300 pages would be less tedious. Bishop is right in thinking that there are elements of that experience which are not adequately represented in our sense of the Bible, of sacraments, of relationships, but he has not been able to put the case together in a convincing way.

Meagher's book, by contrast, will engender lively discussion. The idea that there are quite different ways of proclaiming "good news" in the New Testament is common enough in scholarly circles, but is sure to raise some eyebrows among the general audience. We meet John the Baptist calling for a renewal of Israel along the lines of the prophet Malachi. John's earliest disciples took him to be the Elijah about whom the prophet had spoken. All are summoned to repentance and forgiveness of sins in light of the impending judgment. Just as the Baptist's gospel is quite independent of later Christian appropriation of it, so, too, Jesus is independent of "Christian" preaching. Jesus summons

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humanity to a new vision of righteousness in light of the Dominion of God. God's unqualified love and mercy contains a demand within it to reject our versions of righteousness, which are conveniently cut down to human size and possibilities. Jesus never presumes upon God's judgment. He even hints that all who have sought righteousness may enter the Dominion of God, though the Pharisees may suffer the considerable "humiliation" of being "least" there.

The gospel of those who first preached about Jesus also turns out to be quite diverse. For those, like Paul, who turned to the Greek-speaking Gentiles the message of Jesus as messiah proclaimed freedom from the Law and thus shattered the boundaries of the chosen people. Jewish Christians, on the other hand, sought continuity with the past in a new perception of the Law understood after the coming of the Messiah. From a scholarly viewpoint, the trickiest part of Meagher's book is on the fourth Gospel, and the implications of an obscure figure named Demetrios from 3 Jn. Meagher uses rather meager evidence to suggest that there was a "gospel" being preached which rejected the tendency of the Gospel of the apostles to focus on Jesus as mediator of salvation. Instead, it found freedom from the restraints of traditional righteousness in a message of Truth that existed in the community. Salvation is found through knowledge of that truth.

The final "gospel," the ultimate, Meagher argues, is represented by a stage in the development of the Johannine tradition. That gospel was able to counter the gospel of Demetrios by taking up the Beloved Disciple's proclamation of Jesus as the unique Son of God. Jesus is the Truth, the ultimate heavenly revealer. He is the Paraclete, not merely the source of the Paraclete. The final redaction of the Johannine traditions incorporated this gospel with some of the older "gospels" to shape a picture of Jesus which embodies a number of traditions. This book makes fascinating reading, though its Epilogue hides behind the claim of making an "historical reconstruction" and does not speak to the religious and theological questions that the book is bound to raise for the general reader. Such readers will be left to puzzle out for themselves in which Gospel they hear the message of God's salvation.

Populism, pragmatism, & activism

C. WRIGHT MILLS,
AN AMERICAN UTOPIAN

Irving Louis Horowitz

The Free Press, $24.95, 341 pp.

Mark Naison

IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ'S *C. Wright Mills, An American Utopian* is a fascinating intellectual biography plagued by a deep ambivalence about Mills's political activism. Horowitz, a scholar of monumental thoroughness examines Mills's personal life, relations with colleagues, and the evolution of his sociological work with great subtlety and skill. His analysis of the intellectual milieu which shaped Mills's development, and his discussion of American intellectual life in the 1950s is nothing short of brilliant. But when Horowitz, in his concluding chapters, seeks to deal with Mills the advocate, something is lost. A figure distinguished by profound political passions and moral fervor becomes, in Horowitz's hands, safe and sanitized, a pioneer as a sociologist, but a man whose political interventions were unworthy of his intellect.

My negative reactions to the last parts of this book stem partially from my own political biography. When I decided to attend Columbia during the early 1960's, one of the attractions of the place was that C. Wright Mills had taught there. To me, Mills represented the quintessence of the politically engaged intellectual, someone who presented critical analyses of American society in commonsense language and who was unafraid to take unpopular stances on issues like disarmament and the Cuban Revolution. His example not

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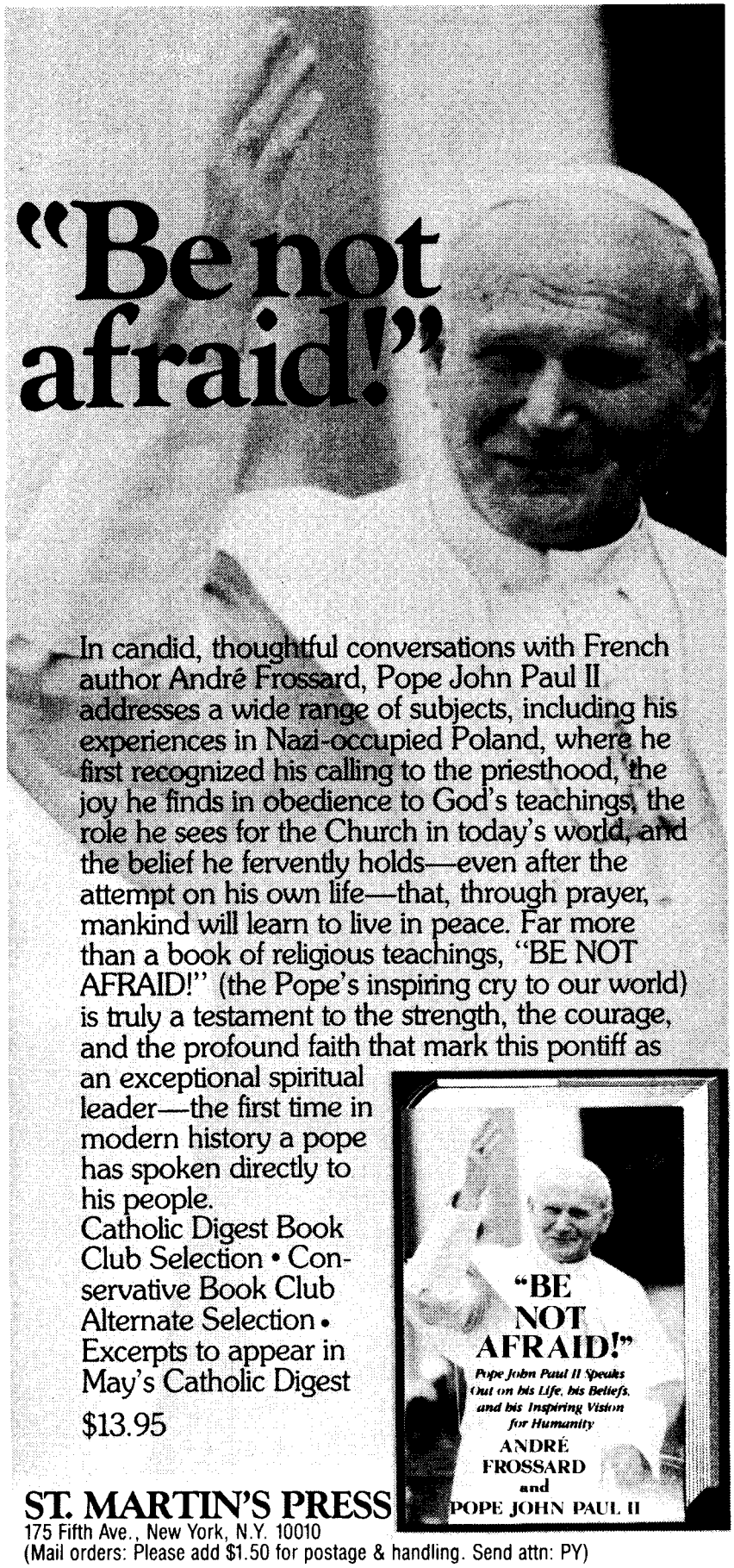
only gave legitimacy to critical scrutiny of American institutions (at a time when "consensus" ruled the intellectual roost), but endowed direct action, whether in the peace or civil rights movements, with moral and intellectual grandeur.

Horowitz describes one side of the Mills which attracted me, the critic of mainstream sociology, with empathy and precision. He examines how Mills, a Texan shaped by "populism and pragmatism" found himself an outsider at Columbia in the fifties, an institution that "saw itself as a veritable enclave of civilization amidst a sea of barbarism." Surrounded by colleagues who celebrated the end of ideology and made civility a religion, Mills sought to rejuvenate sociology as something "serviceable to radical aims . . . or at least capable of triumph." Committed to challenging dogma and cant, whether in the name of orthodox Marxism or Parsonian functionalism, Mills struggled to create a world view in which ethical considerations were front and center, in which the pretensions of the powerful were exposed to critical scrutiny. His goal, as Horowitz ably asserts, was "to engage in a politics of truth on the part of the powerless." His most important theoretical work, *The Sociological Imagination*, "helped make possible the penetration of a field by a new generation of social scientists dedicated to problems of social change, rather than system maintenance." His trilogy of empirical works, *White Collar*, and *Power Elite*, and *New Men of Power*, helped popularize sociology as a discipline capable of illuminating hidden trends in modern American society, while shattering complacency about the perfectibility of American democracy. And his book, *The Marxists*, a seminal effort to rescue Marxism from dogmatism, presaged Eurocommunism in its willingness to subject Marxism to the claims of moral agency and reconcile it with liberal pluralism. To Horowitz, Mills, more than any other modern thinker set forth usable standards for the "sociological imagination"; "historical specificity and empirical predictability, living social doctrine presented in living language, and a meaning of impact of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ideas that could match, if not outstrip informed biographies and informing newspapers."

Horowitz's summaries of Mills's works, his exploration of his troubled relationship with prominent colleagues (he makes wonderful use of Mills's correspondence with Richard Hofstadter and Lionel Trilling), and his evaluation of Mills's theoretical contribution to social science are all major contributions to the intellectual history of the postwar period. For Horowitz, Mills reintroduced moral and political passion to social science at a time when passivity and academic distance were the most approved stances. Flawed in his personal life, torn between his populist hopes for the downtrodden and an elitist conception of the intellectual's role, he made a major contribution to seeing the modern world more clearly.

But Horowitz's one chapter on Mills's activism, "The Causes of C. Wright Mills" lacks the subtlety or empathy of his chapters on Mills the social scientist. Horowitz criticizes *Listen Yankee*, Mills's best-selling book on the Cuban revolution, for betraying the skeptical stance that distinguished his sociological work. "Personal and objective factors became desperately, even dangerously intertwined. He began identifying himself with world history and not just social reform. Politics became highly personalized. He saw himself as an actor in, and not just a writer of, great events." That Mills's defense of the Cuban revolution, coming at a time when an American-sponsored invasion of the island seemed imminent, might project a different persona than a sociological work is hardly surprising. But what is ultimately objectionable to Horowitz is that Mills bet on the wrong horse. The Cuba which Mills saw as a new model of humanistic socialism, in Horowitz's view turned out to be little more than a grubby totalitarian dictatorship "utterly dependent on Soviet aid." Regarding the Cuban revolution as "bankrupt," Horowitz sees Mills's extravagant hopes for it as projections of egotism gone mad. "In Cuba, Mills's sense of a revolutionary movement unencumbered by Stalinism was fulfilled as were his own sense of self-importance and larger than life needs. The only thing that began to unravel was the Revolution itself."

The effect of these passages, coming after a deeply respectful treatment of Mills the sociologist, is confusing to the reader. Can Mills's political activism be so neatly separated from his contribution to social science? Can his theoretical legacy be so neatly integrated into a skeptical liberalism (or embittered neoconser-

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REVIEWERS

JOHN RATTE *is Headmaster of the Loomis-Chaffee School in Windsor, Connecticut.*

DENNIS O'BRIEN *was just appointed president of the University of Rochester. He is the author of* Hegel on Reason and History.

PHEME PERKINS *is a professor of theology at Boston College. Her books include* The Gnostic dialogue *and* Hearing the Parables of Jesus.

MARK NAISON *is a member of the Afro-American studies faculty and director of the urban studies program at Fordham University. He is a corresponding editor of* Radical America *and the* Journal of Ethnic Studies.

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vatism)? I think the separation is less neat. While it would take pages to argue, facile statements about the bankruptcy of the Cuban revolution, and its total subservience to the Soviet Union, are open to question. Certainly, the population of Nicaragua, which is served by over 600 Cuban doctors, might find Horowitz's formulation a little extreme. At the very least, whatever idealization of Cuba and Castro Mills might have engaged in is more than made up for by his defense of that revolution's right to survive in the face of the determination of two American presidents to wipe it off the face of the earth. That act of political courage is as much a part of his legacy as his sociological work.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 226)

new mythos cannot be manufactured, but, as Daniel Bell suggests, "must grow out of the deepest needs of individuals, sharing a common awakening." The social and political dangers of the period arise precisely when, in an attempt to end the confusion and uncertainty of the period, archaic and artificial methods are adopted to resolve the dilemma. (The current preoccupation in the church with Marxism, which is itself an ideological relic from the former mechanistic worldview reflects, in my view, just such an attempt to adopt an artificial system of coherence. I, for one, find it a distressing and saddening expression of the spiritual nihilism of our time.)

Finally, I did not intend the article as an attack against the Christian tradition, which has gone through numerous cycles in which its message was reinterpreted and revitalized. I was suggesting that we are in the midst of just such a transformation process today. The new era in the West may well include a renewed sense of the sanctity of life, but it will have to involve some synthesis of the current

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theoretical confusion in Western thought and the realities of our technological age that is, as yet, unclear.

KATHLEEN AGENA

Accessory to murder

Roswell, N.M.

To the Editors: Re "Policy vs Permission" [Correspondence, Mar. 9]: Marion Hall's remarks about the Democratic party's position on abortion are flimsy sophistry. He who can prevent murder but does not is an accessory to murder; no prefix makes any difference whatsoever.

PATRICK GRATTON

Thanatology's role

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: In Francis Kane's articulate and, indeed, beautifully written article "Therapeutic Death" [Feb. 24], he rightfully condemns the public death — whether in the media or in the real hospital room where the patient is surrounded by well-meaning but ghoulish "therapists." The thanatology movement, however, has its importance in its compassion for the patient rather than for the cure alone. Dying patients, for example, are not yanked back into life for as many minutes as possible by teams of technicians but are allowed to die privately, when death is inevitable, with their family around them if they prefer, in their own bed. There also seems to be an understanding of the fact that we are eternal spirits to whom death *should* be seen as a transition. And in its celebration of the life and the love of those left behind by the dying, the movement does not try to manage grief away but only to assuage guilt and lend a lifeline to those who feel as if they should be or are being pulled over the brink into death themselves, in a way, by their bond with the dying. Only protracted grief that may cross over the fuzzy line into a neurosis of the bereaved is treated as a therapeutic *problem*.

And here in the question of neurosis, whether of the dying or the bereaved, is where religious people are concerned, for neurosis or sin or mental error is what we are here to overcome. Far from being narcissistic when we see death as, in part, another means of working out our self-fulfillment, we are attempting to fulfill ourselves as God intended, to make ourselves into spirits who are better able to accept God's will for us, which ultimately is never suffering but peace of mind — and if we can do this in a short time we are not callous, lobotomized freaks but blessed with the ability to come into harmony with God's plan for us, no matter how inharmonious it may at first seem.

I suspect that there are many deeply religious people in the thanatology movement — even that it is at core a religious movement and not a secular one, although the religious inspiration is inherent and not always explicit. As in all movements, the individual is the most important factor when one is personally involved in a death or grief situation, and the help that is given is in proportion to the individual therapist's own peace of soul. But the basic ideas of the thanatology movement have always seemed to me to be from the right source.

ANTONIA RACHIELE

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Thanatology & pain

Amherst, N.Y.

To the Editors: While I am not a member of the thanatology movement, as a professor of philosophy who teaches medical ethics I have an interest in the issues discussed by Francis Kane in his article "Therapeutic Death" [Feb. 24]. I believe he does a serious injustice to the many people in medicine, psychology, social work, and the hospice movement,

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who are attempting to help individuals and families to encounter the realities of death and dying in a more humane way. From personal experience I can report that hospice nurses have provided invaluable assistance to families experiencing the death of a loved one. Perhaps Professor Kane is not interested in controlling pain as he faces death, but I and many others believe that our society has been much too stingy in providing pain relief for dying persons.

I was especially angered by Professor Kane's references to Elizabeth Kübler-Ross. I have read most of her writings, seen her work on film and in documentaries, and heard her in person, and find her to be a humane and enlightened professional. I have never found her to make trivial the dying process, or what death means to those left behind. Rather, in my view she displays a depth of understanding, and a genuine ability to listen to the needs of those dealing with death and dying, a characteristic that has not been a strong point in the medical profession.

In conclusion, I want to point out that philosophers from Socrates through Heidegger have been concerned with taming some of the anxieties which humans experience as they face death. Would Professor Kane argue that the *Phaedo* is an improper intrusion on the privacy of Socrates?

JAMES A. MORAN
Professor of Philosophy
Daemen College

Church/world watch

(Continued from page 234)

thesis he criticizes Carter on Iran and Reagan on Grenada. But the scope of the argument extends beyond these cases to the entire posture of the United States in world politics. Unfortunately, the most pressing instance where the thesis might be tested receives only a passing reference — U.S. support of covert activity against Nicaragua. Moynihan's key position as vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence provides him with a special perspective — and responsibility — on the Nicaragua question. He has not been absent from the debate, but his stance has been decidedly ambiguous. Publicly, he has repeatedly criticized the administration for behavior indicating that our Nicaraguan intervention effectively involves an attempt to overthrow a government. Yet his votes and activity in committee suggest a willingness to accept at face value the administration's rationale that it is only interdicting arms shipments to El Salvador.

The logic of Senator Moynihan's argument in *Loyalties* against the Grenada action should lead *a fortiori* to a firm opposition to current U.S. Nicaraguan policy. A particularly pertinent sentence: "What does it mean to be an American if not to know that law in fact protects the weak?" One can object to aspects of Nicaragua's domestic and international policies and still draw from this sentence the demand that U.S. responses must be measured and limited by an ethic of means — must, in other words, support both law and moral norms.

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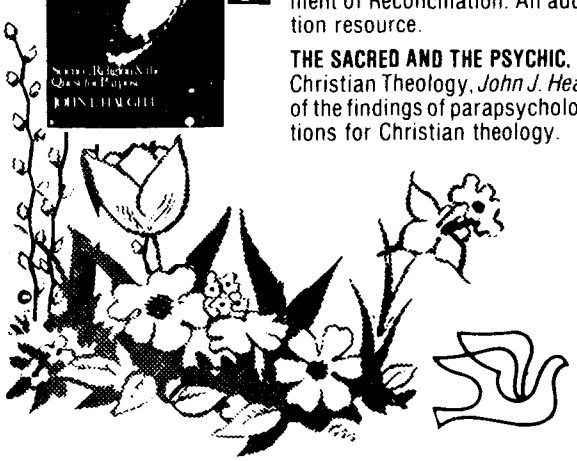

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